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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENTS' DECISIONS REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS

BY

FAY LOUISE FLETCHER ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN

FAMILY STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN ECOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL 1994

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ISBN 0-315-95028-5

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DEGREE: MASTER OF SCIENCE

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENTS' DECISIONS REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS submitted by Fay Louise Joan Fletcher in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Family Studies, in the Department of Human Ecology.

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Abstract

The HIV virus is contracted by specific patterns of risky behaviour. The way to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS is by changing patterns of risky behaviour. Therefore, factors that may facilitate a change in existing sexual behaviours must be included in HIV/AIDS education. The purpose of this research was to understand adolescents' decisions regarding sexual behaviours. Insight into sexual behaviours in the adolescent population will lead to improved intervention strategies.

Ten adolescents participated, five grade nines and five grade elevens. Participants completed a pre-interview survey, attended a focus group, and were interviewed individually. Information was gathered on attitudes towards sexual behaviours (as defined by each participant), values that influence decisions regarding sexual behaviours, perceptions of others' expectations regarding sexual behaviours, and sources of information. The information gathered was analyzed using grounded theory.

Based on the information provided by participants, values and attitudes are important factors in sexual decision making. Based on feelings about values and/or attitudes regarding sexual behaviours, adolescents set sexual limits. Sexual limits refer to the point at which adolescents decide particular sexual behaviours are inappropriate for them personally. Peers played a role in legitimating or supporting decisions regarding sexual behaviours, and continued to be the most often cited source of information on sexual behaviours. Parents were often cited as the source of attitudes and values.

In addition to the concept of sexual limit setting, there was also support for considering developmental aspects of adolescent sexuality. Grade eleven participants had a better understanding than grade nines of values and attitudes

and how important they are in the decision making process. Additionally, there is a notable change from grade nine to eleven in participants' curiosity about sexual behaviours and experimentation with sexual behaviours.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Brenda Munro, first for the inspiration she so innocently provided during my participation in my first graduate level family studies course. It was because of the rewarding experience provided by that classroom environment that I decided to 'change directions' and request admission to the Department of Family Studies.

It was also reassuring to have her support and understanding while completing my graduate program. One day at a time and one hour a day proved to be the most effective way to meet the onging demands of family and school.

I must also thank Dr. Maryanne Poirier-Doherty for always being there. When various tasks seemed to be impossible, there was always a way to make everything come together with a little help from Dr. Poirier.

I am also pleased to have on my committee Dr. Len Stewin. You have provided support and interesting insight which allowed for further discussion about a subject that has become very interesting to me - adolescents.

Finally, my thanks to family members, without whose support and continual encouragement this would not have been possible. To my husband, for sharing the late nights and sleepless nights that are unavoidable with babies and school. To my mother, for the confidence, independence and curiosity that will always allow me to strive for more, knowing that I can accomplish whatever I set my mind to. And to my two children, for feeding my spirit with challenges, rewards, and love.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Recent research showed that a large percentage of Canada's adolescent population is sexually active (King et.al.,1988). The Canada Youth and AIDS Study ([CYAS] King et. al., 1988), showed that 26% of 14 year olds, 46% of 16 year olds and 69% of 19-21 year olds were reported to have had sexual intercourse at least once. Only 16% of the females and 25% of the males in the latter age group reported using condoms most of the time in their sexual encounters and 40% of the males and 25% of the females reported having sex with up to five partners. There is reason to believe that, since 1988, little change has occurred in the high proportion of young Canadians who are sexually active and the riskiness of their behaviour (Doherty-Poirier & Munro, 1991; Williamson, N., 1990; Maclean's. 1993; Bibby & Posterski, 1991; Beazley, Warren, King & Wright, 1993).

Adolescents will continue to be sexually active longer and have more sexual partners than the adult population (Nader et al, 1989). In addition, developmentally, adolescents are in a stage of life that encompasses experimentation with their sexuality at a time when they feel invulnerable (Hein, 1987; Brown & Fritz, 1988; Tucker & Cho, 1991). Unless adolescents take the necessary precautions, the fact that they are sexually active, at a time of life when experimentation and risk-taking are common, places them at risk for contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Given the increasing incidence of AIDS in the Canadian population[1], the unprotected sexual experimentation of adolescents will be fatal for many.

---

[1] The total number of AIDS cases diagnosed from 1990 through 1993 averaged 1146 annually. Furthermore, it is important to allow for unreported cases. For example, in 1991, 1091 cases were reported. Allowing for delayed reporting, the figure increases to 1621. Further adjustment in consideration of underreporting increases the figure to 1907 (Health and Welfare Canada, 1993).

Statistics show that the number of Canadians contracting AIDS during adolescence is consistently high (Health and Welfare Canada, Division of HIV/AIDS Epidemiology, January 1993). Eight hundred and seven or 19.5% of of new cases in 1990 were diagnosed to people twenty through twenty-nine years of age. From 1991 through 1994, the twenty through twenty-nine year age group continued to account for eighteen and one half to twenty percent of those diagnosed. Taking into consideration the seven to ten year incubation period of the HIV virus, a significant number of the cases reported for the 20-29 year age group, were contracted during adolescence. How can the transmission of AIDS be arrested in the adolescent population?

As there is no cure for AIDS and no vaccination to prevent the spread of the HIV virus, the initial response by health and education professionals was to provide information on what HIV/AIDS is, the transmission of the HIV virus, the progression of the disease and high risk populations through education. A review of the research showed that HIV/AIDS education programs did increase knowledge. This was reflected in higher levels of knowledge about transmission, progression, prevention and risk (Andre & Bormann, 1991; Brown &Fritz, 1989; Brown et. al., 1989; Brown et. al., 1990; DiClemente, 1991; Galt et. al., 1989; Hingson et. al., 1990; Tucker & Cho, 1991; Siegel et. al.,1991; Strunin, 1991).

Unfortunately, research also revealed that, even though adequate information was provided through education, HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours were not changing (Andre and Bormann, 1991; Fennell, 1990; Kraft, Bostic, and Tallent, 1990; Strunin & Hingson,1987). AIDS knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient to stop the transmission of AIDS.

Because the HIV virus is contracted by specific patterns of risky behaviour, the way to prevent the spread of AIDS is by changing the patterns of risky behaviour (Siegel et. al.,1986; Andre and Bormann, 1991; King and Wright, 1993). Even with the discovery of an effective treatment or vaccine, controlling the spread of AIDS will continue to depend, in part, on persuading at-risk populations to modify behaviours implicated in the transmission of the disease.

The link between education and behaviour must be established in order to reduce the transmission of AIDS during adolescence. Previous theories and models of behaviour change or intervention propose a number of factors that are worth consideration for the future development of HIV/AIDS education programs aimed at behaviour change. Because the transmission of AIDS occurs as part of social interaction with others, individuals' perceptions of others expectations should be considered. This is particularly true during adolescence. During the largely conformist years of adolescence, identification with a group often means assumption and internalization of that group's values and beliefs (Gruber & Chambers, 1987). As adolescence is a time when significant others play a crucial role in determining behaviours, consideration should be given to subjective norms in education programs aimed at behaviour change.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) claim that the inclusion of subjective norms is essential in programs aimed at changing behaviours. A subjective norm is the person's perception that most people who are important to him/her[2] think he/she should or should not perform the behaviour in question (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Throughout this research, the expectations adolescents perceive from important others reflect the subjective norms. For the purpose of this research, 'people that are important' to the adolescent will be referred to as referents or referent groups.

---

[2] Individuals or groups that are important to the person are called referent individuals or referent groups.

In order to examine the expectations of a number of referents or referent groups, this research examined adolescents' perceptions of the expectations of society, culture, parents, friends, church, school, and media. Encouraging expectations that support HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours will, in theory, lead to the performance of AIDS preventive behaviours.

Furthermore, the subjective norm is a function of both a person's perception of what specific others think he or she should do regarding a behaviour and the person's motivation to comply with these referents (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Fisher and Fisher, 1992).

The motivation to comply is best conceived as the person's general tendency to accept the directives of a given referent or referent group. Motivation to comply increases with the referent's power to reward or punish the person, with the person's liking for the referent, with the referents' perceived expertise, and the extent to which it is legitimate for the referent to make demands on the person. If a person believes that most referents with whom he/she is motivated to comply think he/she should perform the behaviour, he/she will perceive more social pressure to do so than if he/she believes that any one referent whom he/she is motivated by thinks he/she should perform the behaviour. A person's motivation to comply with various referent groups may also be related to certain personality characteristics such as need for approval or affiliation (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Adolescence is a time when some referents are believed to have more influence than others.

Another aspect of the norms is the way in which they are formed or communicated to the adolescent. According to the literature, subjective norms may be formed as a result of what important others say as well as by the messages as interpreted from social situations and settings (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). For this reason, an examination of social norms would be incomplete without further examination of the situational factors and settings in which sexual behaviours occur.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: Education to date has been successful at increasing AIDS knowledge, but has not led to a reduction in high risk behaviours that lead to increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. In order to reduce the spread of AIDS, the adolescent population must practice HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours. These behaviours include a range of active decisions regarding sexual limit setting, abstinence,.condom use, and avoiding the use of needles that may transmit the virus. This research focused on the sexual behaviours that have the potential to transmit the HIV virus. Additional factors that may facilitate a change in existing sexual behaviours must be included in HIV/AIDS education. Accordingly, the purpose of the proposed research is to understand adolescents' decisions regarding sexual behaviours. By understanding what influences adolescents' decisions regarding sexual activity, education aimed at changing risky sexual behaviours, specifically HIV/AIDS education, may be more effective.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Thornburg (1981) examined the age at which most sexual information was learned. Many children learned about petting, prostitution and sexual intercourse between the ages of nine and eleven. Grades seven and eight, or twelve and thirteen years are the peak ages with 51.4% of all sexual information learned. Although most literature cited the most common source of sexual information in the adolescent population was their peers, research also showed that parents support the early aquisition of sexual knowledge.

Alexander and Jorgensen (1983) found that 88% of parents believed that facts about venereal disease and it's prevention should be introduced before tenth grade. Thus, based on Thornburg's (1981) findings and Alexander and Jorgensen's (1983) findings, adolescents are learning about sexuality and parents endorse sexuality education.

Alter et. al. (1982) defined a number of developmental tasks that need to be accomplished during adolescence. Three of these are identity, intimacy and integrity. Each one provides valuable insight into the distinct personality characteristics of adolescents that put them at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. Identity refers to their quest to define themselves, develop a gender role identity, positive self image, and sense of esteem and competence. Intimacy refers to their efforts to develop the capacity to love and be loved and to be intimate in relationships with others. Efforts at intimacy prepare adolescents for loving relationships. The third developmental task is integrity. Adolescents must develop a foundation for sorting out values and deciding what to believe and how to behave. As Alter et. al. (1982) point out, efforts to successfully achieve identity, intimacy and integrity require experimentation.

Another explanation for experimentation during this stage of adolescence, from 12 -14 years, is second individuation, when the adolescent separates from the closeness of the family. With this separation from the family, adolescents often sense a void or emptiness, which sometimes leads to loss of self-control. One of the potential behavioural problems is premature sexual activity (Mehr, 1981). Although experimentation is prevalent amongst adolescents, it is not always accompanied by good judgement.

Early experimentation with sexuality is often accompanied by risk-taking behaviour performed without much thought of the consequences. The inability to plan or foresee the implications of behaviour is one factor that contributes to risk taking. In addition, adolescents tend to be egocentric and, as a result, unable to recognize the potential consequences of their actions. (Gruber and Chambers, 1987). Adolescents' sense of invulnerability is reflected in research findings by Strunin (1991) that found although knowledge is high concerning transmission, few adolescents saw themselves as being at risk for contracting HIV. Adolescents who have not learned to exercise judgement may have little sense of the dangers to which impulses may lead (Mehr, 1981).

The need to form a concept of 'self', the inability to plan, and the feeling of invulnerability combine to produce a population that is very susceptible to risk taking behaviour. The question, then, is "how do we arrest the spread of AIDS in a population that is sexually active, experimenting with their sexuality, and prone to taking risks?". The answer is to eliminate, or at least reduce, high risk sexual behaviours.

It is important to teach and encourage HIV/AIDS preventive sexual behaviours in the early adolescent population. Junior high is the time when sexual activity begins (Siegel, Lazarus, Krasnovsky, Durbin, and Chesney,1991). By targeting this high risk population at the onset of their sexual activity, or at least curiosity, one assumes the easier task of teaching HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours rather than changing already established high risk behaviours.

A first response was to provide education, assuming that knowledge of AIDS and transmission of HIV would solve the problem. A review of literature on adolescent's knowledge of HIV/AIDS, shows a steady, and encouraging, increase in their understanding of HIV/AIDS. In 1985, the highest scoring students answered only 47% of a research questionnaire on HIV/AIDS correctly (Price, Desmond, & Kukulka, 1985). By 1989 (Brown et. al., 1989), adolescent's knowledge of HIV/AIDS had improved.

For example, in the American literature, Brown et. al. (1989) found high levels of HIV/AIDS knowledge[3], consistent with findings of Brown and Fritz (1988) and Galt et. al. (1989). Kraft et. al. (1990) found that the majority of grade nine students had adequate information on the pathology of HIV/AIDS, symptoms, lab detection, infection, progression, lack of cure and lack of vaccine. Follow-up studies (Hingson et. al., 1990; Strunin, 1991; Tucker and Cho, 1991) showed that knowledge regarding the transmission of HIV/AIDS had improved significantly since 1988, and DiClemente et.al. (1991) found generally high levels of HIV/AIDS knowledge. Recent researchers found that a majority of adolescents are familiar with facts about HIV/AIDS (Andre and Bormann,1991; Vered et. al., 1991). Similarly, Skurnick et. al. (1991) found that students were well aware of the progression of HIV/AIDS and groups at high risk. Overall, adolescents have a good understanding of HIV/AIDS.

Unfortunately, previous researchers also found that knowledge of AIDS progression and modes of transmission did not necessarily lead to HIV/AIDS preventive sexual behaviours

---

[3] Knowledge was assessed based on answers to questions dealing with groups at risk, causes of AIDS, transmission and questions on the course of the disease.

(Skurnick et. al.,1991; Strunin & Hingson,1987; Fennell, 1990; Andre and Bormann, 1991) . For example, Skurnick et. al. (1990) found that the frequency of condom use, for those students that were sexually active, did not vary systematically with their ratings of condom's protective value. Although they rated condoms as a very effective measure of protection, they did not use condoms for safer sex. Self reported sexual behaviours were inconsistent. They could identify HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours, but did not practice safe sex.

Similarly, Canadian research revealed that a high proportion of sexually active teens take risks in having sexual intercourse with multiple partners and without using protection (Williamson, N., 1991; Macleans, 1993; Bibby & Posterski, 1991; Beazley, Warren, King, & Wright, 1993). Clearly, knowledge about HIV/AIDS, it's transmission, and safer sex does not necessarily translate into adopting safer sex behaviours in the adolescent population.

If the aim is to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS by changing high risk behaviours, education which increases knowledge of HIV/AIDS is necessary, but far from sufficient. This fact has been communicated repeatedly in more recent research publications (Andre & Bormann, 1991; Beazley, Warren, King, & Wright, 1992; Beazley, King, Wright, Warren, Doherty-Poirier & Munro, 1991; Robertson,& Petracek,1992). As Smith and Lathrop (1993) so aptly note, transmission occurs within a matrix of social, biological, and environmental factors. To address disease prevention in the absence of including relationships, social, behavioural and emotional needs is futile.

Given adolescents' propensity to risk-taking, their sense of invulnerability, and the inability to anticipate the consequences of their actions, Siegel et. al. (1991) suggest that educators pay particular attention to adolescents' emotional responses. In particular, educators must not dismiss the importance of peer pressure and adolescents' anxiety with regard to sexual matters, which may inhibit planning for the consequences of sexual activity. Neither should the importance of peers be underestimated.

Adolescents, in their efforts to evaluate and measure themselves, use friends as their primary source of acceptance (Mehr, 1981). During the largely conformist years of adolescence, identification with peers often means assumption and internalization of that group's values and beliefs (Gruber & Chambers,1987). Internalization of the group's values and beliefs translates into acceptance of subjective norms and, ultimately, performance of behaviours based on the expectations defined by those perceived norms. Peers are an invaluable resource to behaviour intervention programs, as they have the potential to promote positive norms regarding risk reduction behaviour. Peers are, therefore, effective in creating behavioural change (King and Wright, 1993).

There is considerable evidence that, in addition to the social relationships (peers), the family has significant influence on adolescents' attitudes and behaviours in general and about sex in particular (Gruber and Chambers, 1987). Although social relationships may, in fact, be the most influencial of the referent groups for adolescents, the influence of the family cannot be ignored. In fact, no influencial referents should be ignored if the objective is to understand the formation and effect of subjective norms on behaviours. Another referent that warrants examination, based on it's effect on HIV/AIDS knowledge, is the media (ref.) and the school (Doherty & Munro, 1991).

Research by Brown et. al. (1990), found that students from grades five through seven had high levels of knowledge, scoring greater than 80% in response to questions addressed by the media. Students who received HIV/AIDS information from magazines and television obtained the highest level of knowledge as measured by knowledge questions developed for that study. Since it was indicated that the media was a powerful source of education, it also has the potential to be a powerful referent in defining subjective norms. Peers, the family, and media will all be significant referent groups to examine in relation to adolescent's subjective norms.

There is no research to date on the benefits of including subjective norms as part of adolescent HIV/AIDS education. However, research in the gay community shows that intervention that included subjective norms were more successful at changing high risk sexual behaviours in that population.

The goal of research by Kelly et. al. (1990) was to better identify psychological and background differences between gay men who had been successful at reducing high risk behaviour patterns and those who had not. Perceived norms concerning the acceptability of safer sex practices were associated with HIV/AIDS preventive behaviour. Gay males who did not engage in unprotected anal intercourse were more likely to consider safe behaviour an accepted norm within their social network. Those that perceived condoms as an acceptable part of sexual behaviours were more likely to use condoms.

Also in the gay population, dramatic behavioural changes have been attributed to a shift in community norms resulting from the design and implementation of a multifaceted community-level HIV risk-reduction education. The program was designed after panels of experts determined that information, motivation, skill training and a modification of peer norms could contribute to behavioural change (McKusick et. al. 1985)

Coates (1990) also found support for the theory that one component of a successful risk-reduction program is the modification of subjective norms. In his study of the gay community, individuals who perceived that social norms supported high-risk behaviour were more likely to practice high risk behaviour. Networks and norms influenced which behaviours were labeled risky and which risky behaviours were supported by the community.

Offir et. al. (1993), stated that intervention needs to focus on ways to continue to make safer sex part of the male gay identity and the social norms of both the gay community and society at large. The same argument applies to the adolescent population. Intervention needs to focus on ways to make safer sex a part of the adolescent identity and social norms of the adolescent community.

Others habe indicated that we must work to create a social climate where it is the norm, not the exception, to have mutually satisfying, non-exploitive and non-risky sexual relations (Smith and Lathrop,1993). In the young adolescent population, this translates into creating a social climate where it is the norm to practice HIV/AIDS preventive behaviour.

The results of the research by Kelly et. al. (1990) led to the conclusion that primary prevention campaigns that convey risk precautionary behaviour as an accepted peer norm were effective. In addition, interventions that directly modify social norms to discourage high risk practices may now be especially important. There must be an emphasis on internal control and personal behaviour choice. This research noted that future research would be incomplete, however, without an understanding of how those norms were affected by situational factors.

According to Coates (1990), effective interventions depend on community-specific information about the prevalence of high-risk behaviours, the determinants of those behaviours, and analysis of the social climate in which the behaviours are occurring. The social climate in which sexual activities occur is one of the important determinants that may provide a link between adolescent knowledge of HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours and practice of HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours. For the purposes of this research, the social climate will be referred to as those situational factors that play an important role in the adolescent's decision to perform HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours.

The term situational factors refers to sets of social circumstances that act to inhibit or facilitate risk-taking behaviour (King et. al., 1993). These situational factors may support or challenge previously held subjective norms regarding HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours, or subjective norms may be abandoned completely due to the situational factors.

Offir et. al. (1993) found that justification was provided for the occurrence of risky sex under certain conditions. Some respondents suggested that it is sometimes too difficult to think rationally enough in sexual situations to avoid risky behaviour or that choosing to engage in risky sex may be a reasonable decision in certain circumstances. Respondents that viewed their risky behaviour as being due to atypical situational factors, believed that those 'exceptions' did not truly qualify as health risk behaviours.

Valdiserri (1989) found that adolescents behave much the same way as the gay community. Specific situational variables impede condom use, including failure to prepare for sexual intercourse. Other research, aimed at education to prevent teen pregnancy and STD transmission also recognized the importance of situational factors.

Teens need to be aware of how to anticipate the possibility of sexual intimacy within a developing relationship so that if intercourse is accepted and impending, they may plan for contraception (Herold et. al.,1990). In addition, teens need to be made aware of the need for consistent contraceptive use. For example, the literature explains that this would include discussion of occasions that are conducive to non-use and the tactics for dealing with such vulnerable situations. Similarly, teens must be prepared for situations which are conducive to sexual activity, and be prepared for dealing with situations in which they may be vulnerable to becoming sexually active.

Kelly et. al. (1990) implemented a behavioural HIV/AIDS education program that included social support development. The program was effective in decreasing the frequency of high risk sexual practice and increasing refusal skills and HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours. As many researchers have concluded, there is a need for evaluation to determine which components of sex education programs are most effective in bringing about change in behaviours. Previous models of behaviour change have not given adequate attention to the nature of social interaction. Possible changes which may help to manipulate the social environment so that it is supportive of risk reduction behaviour and the extent to which the behaviour is legitimated by media and peer norms has not been addressed (King and Wright, 1993).

Previous research shows that education through information and skill acquisition alone will not ensure the use of those skills under the pressure of conflicting expectations and challenging social settings. Further research on norms regarding adolescent sexuality, values, attitudes, sexual limit setting, and the social contexts in which decisions about sexual activity are made is required. Therefore, the proposed research is of an exploratory nature in order to elicit information which can foster a greater appreciation of the dominant sexual understandings, sexual meanings, and sexual cultures of adolescents.

The underlying assumption that guides the process of grounded theory is that all of the concepts pertaining to a phenomenon have not been identified in a particular target population, or the relationships between the concepts is poorly understood or conceptually undeveloped (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This assumption is the driving force behind this research. It is believed that many of the concepts that pertain to changing the sexual behaviours of the adolescent population (norms, values, attitudes, sexual limit setting, and situational factors in particular) have been identified, but the relationships between the concepts has not been developed.

Based on the assumptions of grounded theory, the research question should identify the phenomenon to be studied, but allow for the flexibility and freedom to explore the phenomenon in depth (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Thus, the research question was:

> What influences adolescents' decisions about
> sexual behaviours?

The objectives of the research were to:

1. analyze the range of adolescents' sexual activity in particular contexts and cultures;
2. explore the dynamic processes (including source and contexts) through which adolescents learn about sexual issues, and how values and attitudes develop and change;
3. examine the personal, social, and environmental contexts in which adolescents' sexual activity takes place, and the ways in which such activities are explained and justified;
4. examine socially approved and discouraged sexual activites.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Rationale

The essence of qualitative research is to discover the meanings and assumptions underlying human behaviour. It is aimed at understanding the meaning or interpretation a person has of the rules, issues, and behaviour of his or her culture (Field and Morse, 1985). The meanings behind the sexual behaviours of adolescents can only be captured by hearing directly from young people themselves, what sexual behaviours mean to them. Theoretical assumptions also direct the method of research adopted.

The importance of gathering qualitative data in relation to changing adolescent's risk-related sexual behaviours stems from the theoretical assumption that sexual activity is, to a large extent, socially constructed. In order to affect moments that are crucial to the sex-related behaviours that transmit HIV, it is important to understand how the adolescents view their behaviours and make their decisions.

The interview for this research was designed to be sensitive to the social and cultural processes which provide meaning as adolescents pursue their sexual interests. Little was known about the expectations, attitudes, values, sexual limit setting and situational factors that influence adolescent sexual behaviours. The objective was not to disprove or prove anything, but to learn and gather more information. Interviews allowed for an indepth exploration into the meaning of sexuality to young people, the contextual factors influencing their sexual activity, and the evolution of their norms.

Data Analysis

In order not to be confined within a pre-existing model or theory that may limit the development of new ideas, the process of grounded theory was employed.

Grounded theory is a research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon. The objective is to begin with an area of study and then allow what is relevant to emerge (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Similarly, Huberman and Miles (1994) write that, at the heart of analytic induction, is the thesis that there are regularities to be found in both the physical and social worlds. The intent of this analytic process is to move from the descriptive to the explanatory. When a theme or pattern is identified inductively, the researcher then moves into verification mode, trying to confirm or qualify the finding. This then prompts the researcher to initiate yet another inductive cycle. This analytic process was the most natural and appropriate way to effectively narrate the findings that emerged on adolescent sexuality.

The thirteen steps suggested by Huberman and Miles (1994) were:

(1) Noting patterns and themes
(2) Seeing plausibility, making intuitive sense
(3) Clustering by conceptual grouping
(4) Making metaphors, a kind of figurative grouping
(5) Counting
(6) Contrasting and comparing
(7) Unbundling variables that have been prematurely grouped or simply taking a less monolithic look
(8) Subsuming particulars into general, shuttling back and forth between first level data and more general categories
(9) Factoring
(10) Noting relations between variables
(11) Finding intervening variables
(12) Building a logical chain of evidence
(13) Making conceptual/theoretical coherence - usually through comparison with referent constructs and literature.

Based on these guidelines, the responses from all the grade nine subjects were grouped and the responses from all the grade eleven subjects were grouped. Following that, the responses of both grades were grouped by question. At this point, the questions were examined for potential categories. For example, the behaviours that adolescents reported were right or wrong for them to participate in and risky behaviours were grouped together and categorized as 'sexual limit setting'. The categories that were used were either identified prior to the analysis and remained applicable throughout the analytic process, or emerged out of the data.

Next, the responses were examined first by grade to see if there were similarities between the participants, and then based on sexual experience to see if there were similarities among those participants (See Figure 1). This way, trends regarding attitudes, values, perceptions of expectations, sexual limit setting and situational factors were allowed to emerge dependent on grade or sexual experience. There was extensive interplay between comparison and contrast both by grade and by sexual experience to build mini theoretical frameworks.

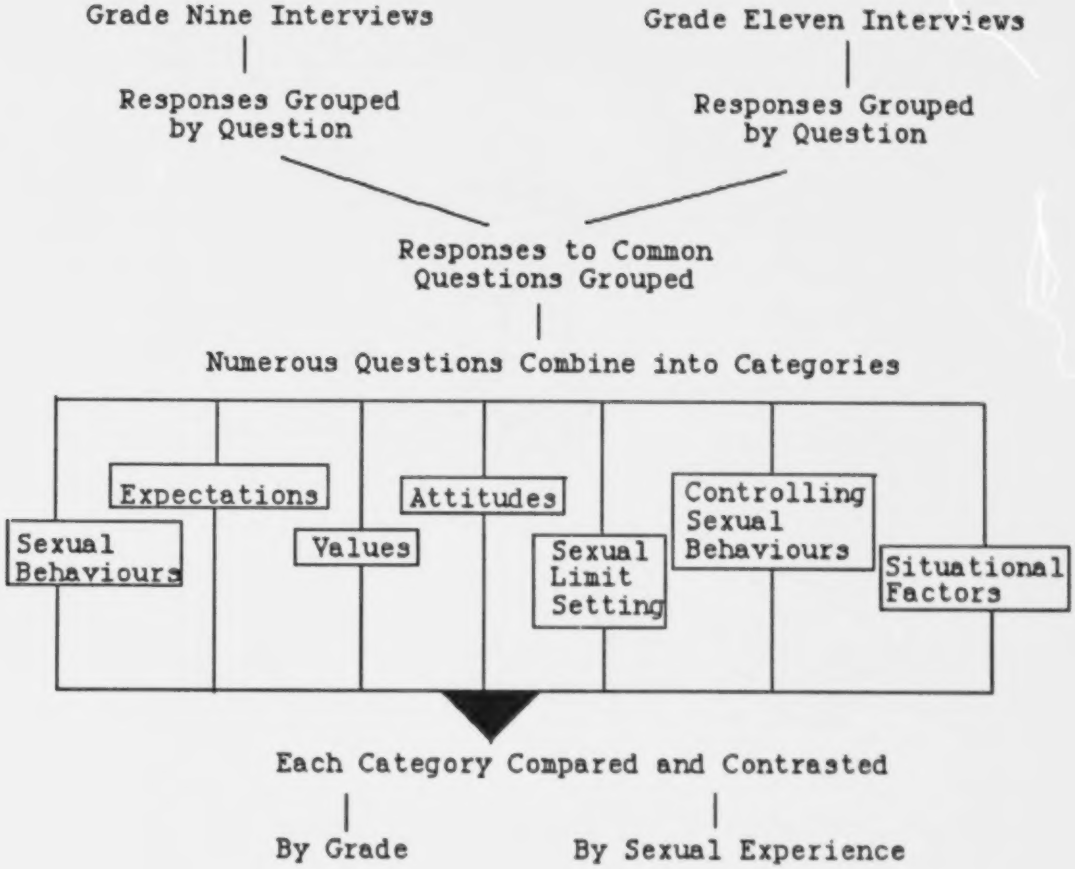
Grade Nine Interviews
Grade Eleven Interviews
Responses Grouped by Question
Responses Grouped by Question
Responses to Common Questions Grouped
Numerous Questions Combine into Categories
Sexual Behaviours
Expectations
Values
Attitudes
Sexual Limit Setting
Controlling Sexual Behaviours
Situational Factors
Each Category Compared and Contrasted
By Grade
By Sexual Experience

Figure 1: Analytic Process

Presentation of Results and Discussion

Grounded theory is based on the belief that understanding of a phenomenon increases as the researcher interacts with the data. Insight and understanding come from collecting the data, asking questions about the data, making comparisons, making hypotheses, and developing 'mini-frameworks' about concepts and their relationships (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

> In classic terms, sociologists and anthropologists have shown us that finding categories and the relationships and patterns between and among categories leads to completeness in the narrative. (Janesick, 1994)

In order to write a complete narrative on adolescent sexuality, categories and the relationships and patterns between them have been examined. Both focus groups and individual interviews were recorded, and transcripts and fieldnotes from both were reviewed. In addition, pre-interview questionnaires were reviewed and matched with individual interview transcripts.

The results of the measurements (focus groups, pre-interviews and individual interviews), and discussion of the results are presented together. As this researcher began the analytic process involved in qualitiative research, it became very clear that, at a personal level, the only comfortable way to do the material justice was to present the results and discussion as one. In order to feel prepared to defend what seemed at the time a radical approach to the presentation of the results, advice from respected authors of qualitative researchers was sought. The following appeared in an article written by two highly revered writers.

> This increasing sensitivity to concepts, their meaning and relationships is why it is so important to interweave data selection with data analysis.... The illustrative materials are meant to give a sense of what the observed work is really like; while the researcher's interpretations are meant to represent a more detached conceptualization of that reality (Strauss and Corbin, 1990)

Strauss and Corbin (1990) remark that insight and understanding about a phenomenon increase as you interact with your data. One idea or insight may spark another. As the process evolves, the researcher looks more closely at the data to give meaning to words that seemed previously not to have meaning, and to look for situations that might explain what is happening.

Definition of Terms

Sexual Behaviours

It is inappropriate to use a standard definition of sexual behaviours for the purpose of this research. Adolescents were requested to explain how they define sexual behaviours. In doing so, the researcher and the participant share a common understanding of what constitutes sexual behaviour. In addition, insight into another aspect of the adolescent culture is gained.

Sexual Limit Setting

Sexual limit setting is a term coined by Herold et. al. (1990), noting that one way of avoiding adolescent pregnancy is for teens to set sexual limits that stop short of intercourse. Sexual limit setting, as they have used the term, refers to a series of active behaviours that can be taught to adolescents. In this case, sexual limit setting deals more specifically with internal limit setting that adolescents practice. Participants' sexual limits can be understood by looking at what sexual behaviours they feel are acceptable for their age group, what sexual behaviours are wrong, and what sexual behaviours are risky.

Coding

It is also important to understand the coding which has been used in order to identify the sexual experience of each participant. Those participants who described sexual experience as holding hands, hugging and kissing (not deep kissing) are identified by the descriptor non-active (NA). Those participants who have experienced hugging, kissing, and petting are identified by the descriptor sexually active (SA). Those participants who have experienced sexual intercourse are identified by the descriptor intercourse (IC).

In addition, participants are identified according to their grade. Participants in grade nine are identified by a 9, grade elevens by an 11. For example, Susan (11,IC) is participant psuedonym Susan, grade 11, experienced sexual intercourse.

The Sample

It is commonly understood in research that multiple cases in multiple settings helps generalizability of results. It is not as commonly understood, though, that 'cross-site' analytic work is not so simple when dealing with qualitative research methods. 'Cross-site' refers to the situation where individual participants are located in many different settings. For the purpose of this research, that would mean finding adolescents from a variety of communities or social groups.

As Huberman and Miles (1994) pointed out, individuals from different sites cannot be readily compared. There is a danger that multiple cases would be analyzed at high levels of inference, aggregating out the local webs of causality and ending with a smoothed set of generalizations that may not apply to any single case. Caution must be exercised in aggregating or averaging results in order to avoid misinterpretation and superficiality.

For this reason, it was not only appropriate, but reassuring, to know that the adolescents who made up the sample were, to a large extent, homogenous. The sample is consistent in that all participants were currently attending school, lived at home with both parents (with two exceptions), were Canadian-born, planned to pursue secondary education, and two or more often shared some 'common ground' as snowball sampling was employed.

The Participants

Ten adolescents received the consent of their parents to participate in the study. They comprised a purposive sample. All were chosen by the interviewers because they were accessible (through common friends or parents) and willing to discuss this sensitive subject. Each of the participants were part of a focus group, completed a pre-interview questionnaire and were then interviewed one on one.

Characteristics of the Participants

There were ten individual interviewees, five females and five males. The five females included two grade nines and three grade elevens. Three males were in grade nine and two males were in grade eleven. Seven of the ten participants felt that their education would be complete upon their graduation from University. The remaining three did not know when they would complete their education. Eight of the ten participants were living at home with their parents (one with father and stepmother), one lived at home with her mother, and one lived with her boyfriend. All the parents (including the step-parent) were Canadian Citizens with the exception of one American Citizen and one whose parents were both born in Brazil. Six of the ten held a part time job, working 2-20 hours per week (See Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of Participants by Grade

	Gender	Finish Education	Live with	Parents born	Work
Grd 9	2F,3M	3x graduate University 2x don't know	4x parents 1x father/step	3x both Canada 1x Canada/U.S. 1x both Brazil	2x no 1x 2 hrs/week 2 babysit/paper route 6-10 hrs/week
Grd 11	3F/2M	4x graduate University 1x don't know	3x parents 1x mom only 1x boyfriend	5x both Canada	3x no work 3x work 10-20 hrs/wk

Table 2: Alcohol/Drug Use by Grade

	Smoke	Chew Tobacco	Marijuana	Other Ill. Drugs	Medical Drugs	Alcohol	Solvents
Grd 9	5x never	3x never 1x weekly 1x spec. occ.	5x never	4x never 1x weekly	2x never 2x monthly 1x 2-3x/mnth	1x never 1x 2-3x/mnth 3x spec. occ.	5x never
Grd 11	2x never 1x <10/day 2x 10-20/day	5x never	4x never 1x weekly	5x never	2x never 3x eveyday	2x never 1spec occ. 1x 1/mnth 1x 1/wk	5x never

Alcohol and Drug Use of the Participants

Most participants had seldom smoked nor drank. Seven of the ten had never smoked cigarettes. The three that had smoked were all in grade eleven, two females smoked 10-20 per day. None of them had ever chewed tobacco, nine had never used marijuana and the one that had (grade eleven) smoked it once a week. Nine had never used any illegal drugs, the one that did used it approximately once per week. Four did not use any medical drugs, the other six used them in varying amounts. See Table 2.

Sexual Experience of the Participants

The sexual experiences of the participants varied. Some of the participants described their sexual experience as holding hands or hugging, while others had experienced petting, and others sexual intercourse (see Table 3). This variation became a valuable means of analyzing the data as trends related to sexual experience emerged.

Table 3: Sexual Involvement by Grade

	Hold Hands	Hugging	Deep Kiss	Above Wst Petting	Below Wst Petting	Oral I/C	Vag. I/C no condom	Vag. I/C condom	Anal I/C
Grd	4x 7+	4x 7+	3x 7+	3x never	2x never	3x never	4x never	4x never	5x never
9	1x never	1x once	1x once	1x once	2x once	1x 2		1x 3	
			1x never	1x 3	1x twice	1x 3	1x 3		
Grd	5x 7+	4x 7+	3x 7+	3x 7+	2x 7+	3x never	3x never	3x never	5x never
11		1 never	2 never	2 never	1x once	1x six	2x 7+	2x 7+	
					2x never	1x 7+			

3 three times
7+ seven or more times

Data Collection

Focus Group

Focus group participants were reassured of complete confidentiality not only among group members but especially from the interviewer. The interviewer was directed to establish a comfortable, open, secure atmosphere for the young people to be able to share comfortably. The participants were also assured that there were no right answers, that their answers needed to be heard. Depending on the length of the interview, short breaks were taken during the process (Focus Group Interview Appendix 1).

Pre-Interview Questionnaire

The pre-Interview Questionnaire (Appendix 2) provided some demographics on each participant such as sex, age, grade, grade average, living location, and employment. In addition, other information was obtained on smoking and drug use, and sexual experiences. Finally, a summary of their typical week was provided, citing daily schedules and out of school activities. This information was not used for this research.

Individual Interview

A preliminary analysis of the Individual Interview (Appendix 3) showed that the instrument was effective and meaningful for data collection. The questions and topics were tested for pertinence, flow and sequence, and clarity. In addition, the interview schedules were reviewed by a number of experts and all were in agreement that the full interview had face validity. Following the first data collection (grade 11 sample) using the interview, participants were asked for their comments regarding the interview questions and process.

Participants replied that the questions moved logically and smoothly from topic to topic, were non-threatening and encouraged them to share their ideas and personal experiences. Self reports indicated that young people enjoyed the opportunity to 'think' about the subject of sexual behaviour and to be given the opportunity to voice their opinions.

A review of the Individual Interview Guide (see Appendix 4) led to the following recommendations. Interviews should take 40 to 80 minutes to complete, and, with the informed consent of the participants, the interviews be recorded.

Ethical Considerations

All prospective respondents were required to sign a consent form indicating that they understood the nature of their involvement, that they would guarantee the privacy of others, and that their privacy would be guaranteed (Appendix 5). Because all participants were under the age of eighteen, a signed consent form was also required from a parent or guardian of each participant (Appendix 6).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The initial research question was to focus on adolescents' perceived norms, expectations of various referent groups and the situations that change adolescents' sexual behaviour intentions. While reviewing the data, it became obvious that there was very valuable information on adolescents' values and attitudes that should be documented as well as their perceived expectations, subjective norms, and situational factors which influenced their sexual behaviours. For that reason, the findings review adolescents' definitions of sexual behaviours, the expectations they perceive from various referent groups, adolescents' values and attitudes about sexual behaviours, the existence of sexual limit setting, and, in conclusion, situations that encourage and discourage sexual activity.

Sexual Behaviours

Definition of Sexual Behaviours

All the grade nines identified hugging, kissing, petting, and sexual intercourse as sexual behaviours. Very few of the participants identified holding hands as a sexual behaviour. None of the participants discussed behaviours in conjunction with relationships, feelings, or emotions.

Within the grade eleven sample, most of the participants identified sexual behaviours in relation to emotions and feelings that accompany the behaviours. Susan, Sherri, and Karen, all females and all sexually active, responded similarly when asked to identify sexual behaviours.

> ... like, kissing, hugging and then you get into more serious things, like petting and actually, like foreplay I guess you could call it. ...like it's everything, I think, that it has to do with

> somebody that you care about. ... sitting down and, like, even just a casual kiss, or like casually having your hand on their leg or something, you know.... sexual behaviours isn't necessarily just, like if you're going to have sex, it's everything. Susan (11/IC)

> Holding hands, petting each other like I mentioned before. Just touching each other and caressing and lying down just watching TV could be sexual behaviours. Then just right into intercourse. [int: so any kind of behaviour that shows caring?] Yeah, affection, yeah, any kind that like relates to feelings and emotion. Cause touching is a lot, it feels good and if it's the person you're with makes you feel better about them. Sherri (11/IC)

> ...I think it has to be more than just like physical stuff, it's like feelings too ...it's just that you want to be with them and that, there's sort of them, there's not anybody else. And it's just different than just like a normal friend. Cause, like if you don't feel anything for them, it just doesn't, doesn't work at all. Karen (11/SA)

Neither of the remaining two participants, Brad nor Kevin, were sexually active (beyond holding hands or kissing). For this reason, it was difficult to discern whether this variation in the definition of sexual behaviours was gender-related or dependent on experience.

The way in which sexual behaviours were defined was related to both grade and sexual experience. The grade nines did not associate sexual behaviours with emotions that may be involved. The grade elevens repeatedly linked emotions to the physical actions (Figure 2).

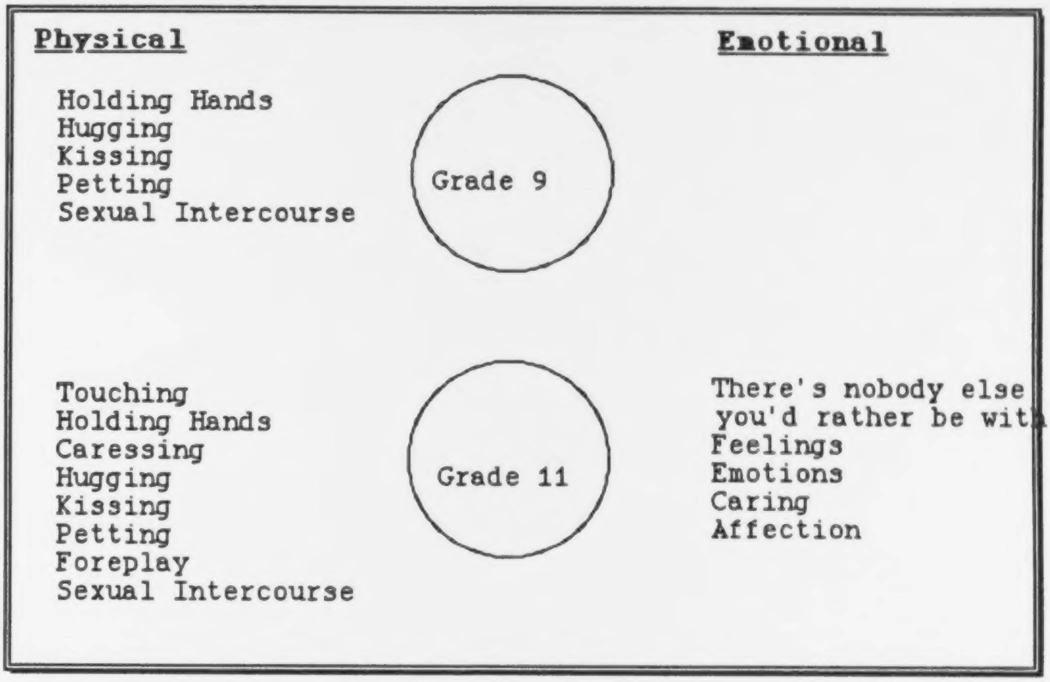
Physical
Emotional
Holding Hands
Hugging
Kissing
Petting
Sexual Intercourse
Grade 9
Touching
Holding Hands
Caressing
Hugging
Kissing
Petting
Foreplay
Sexual Intercourse
Grade 11
There's nobody else
you'd rather be wit
Feelings
Emotions
Caring
Affection

Figure 2: Definition of Sexual Behaviours by Experience

Similarly, the more sexual experience the participants had, the more they bridged the gap between emotional commitment and physical actions (Figure 3). The fact that both grade and sexual experience were related to the change in definition of sexual behaviours was, in part, due to the fact that the grade nines had less experience with sexual behaviours.

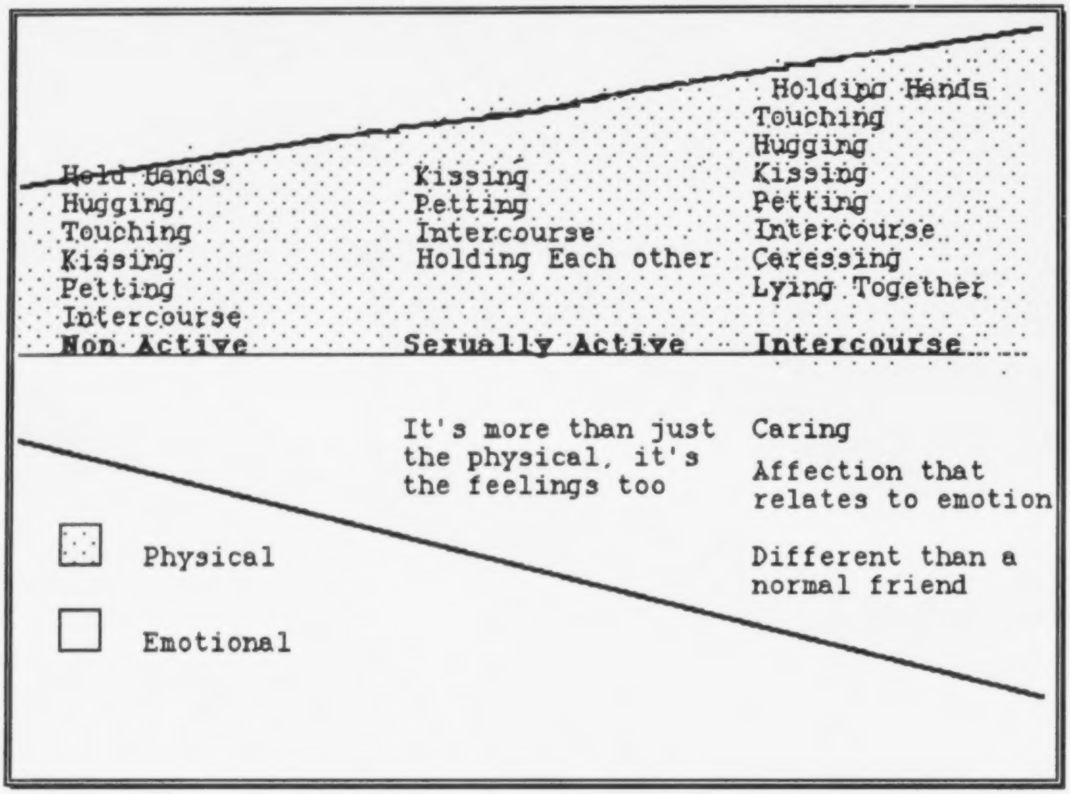
Hold Hands
Hugging
Touching
Kissing
Petting
Intercourse
Non Active
Kissing
Petting
Intercourse
Holding Each other
Sexually Active
Holding Hands
Touching
Hugging
Kissing
Petting
Intercourse
Caressing
Lying Together
Intercourse
It's more than just the physical, it's the feelings too
Caring
Affection that relates to emotion
Different than a normal friend
Physical
Emotional

Figure 3: Definition of Sexual Behaviours By Experience

Where Did You/Do You Learn About Sexual Behaviours?

When asked how they learned about sexual behaviours, most of the grade nines cited school, either health or sexuality education classes, as a source of information. Most of them also said that they learned about sexual behaviours from their friends, that "my friends [told] me about what happened to them and stuff like that (John (9/SA))." Movies and magazines were also mentioned, and parents were cited during the focus group interview as the place not to go for information. On an individual basis, only one participant identified parents as the people to talk to for information on sexual behaviours.

By grade eleven, parents and other family members continued to play a rather insignificant part in teaching sexual behaviours. In the case of Susan, although she felt that she could communicate freely with her mother, she was more likely to seek other sources of information.

> ... sometimes I even talk to my mom about stuff like that. But she can't really offer me any, I don't know, any guidelines or whatever to go by, because she, when she was growing up it was a lot different. [int: so you share with her and she accepts that?] yeah, we talk about everything. Susan (11/IC)

When the siblings were consulted as a source of information on sexual behaviours, the results, in Susan's case, were more detrimental than helpful.

> I have two older sisters and they are a lot older than me. So, they're always teaching me things and showing me things and telling me things. ... and I wanted to find out if everything they said was true... I was really young when I had my first encounter [first sexual intercourse], I think I was twelve and when I was that age, I don't, like it wasn't anything special, I think, I just did it because my sisters had been talking to me about all this stuff and there was a guy that was interested in me and it just happened. Susan (11/IC)

Grade elevens learned about sexual behaviours through different avenues. Although the school was still a source of information regarding sexual behaviours, the grade elevens were more inclined to be critical of the school sexuality education classes.

> ... sex education you don't really learn about sex. You learn more of the body. More of the changes you're going through. Not the sex. Yeah, but they don't teach you how your body is going to react to certain things. No, they just teach you the organs and stuff like that. And what happens. They don't give you anything direct, I don't

> think. [int: they don't really talk about what happens in the relationship, is that what you're saying?] No. No they don't talk about it at all. [int: when you're talking about sexual behaviour you're not just talking intercourse then.] No. No. No, not at all. There's a lot more to it than that. Focus Group 11

> ...maybe if, in school, they were to give us more information, we wouldn't be making incorrect assumptions. Like, maybe sometimes on TV they'll be saying something and it might be morally incorrect sometimes and if, maybe schools or parents were to talk about it more, it would give us more moral basis for us to , like, judge, make our judgements on. Susan (11/IC)

Although most grade elevens said friends were helpful in learning about sexual behaviours, they were more likely to talk about how the media helped them learn about sexual behaviours. The term media, for simplicity, included television, movies, books, and magazines.

> Romance novels. Well, not only romance novels, like, I like to read a lot and even mystery novels, there is some degree of it, like, it's everywhere. Everywhere. Focus Group 11

> ... you learn a lot from TV. Yeah. Soap Operas. Yeah. A lot nowadays is more sexually inclined,... it's becoming more open, like, in the movies Focus Group 11

> .. and watching TV. That a lot, you see a lot on TV. And most imagination, what you'd like it to be. Sherri (11/IC)

The power of the media must not be underestimated. As Sherri indicated, adolescents see a lot on television and, based on that, imagine what they would like sexual intercourse to be. In another discussion, movies that depict very unusual relationships were cited as typical examples of the way that sexuality is portrayed by the media.

Fortunately, although they identified the media as having a role in defining sexual behaviours, they were critical of the media. Similar to the criticism of education programs, adolescents felt that media did not pay enough attention to emotions and feelings that are an integral part of sexual behaviours.

> Like, you don't really see the, like they were saying, the touching and then all that, ...the actual, like affection that people show towards other people. Also, movies tend to portray something that isn't always true, like, women always have perfect bodies and guys and girls always have the best timing, like everything's perfect. Focus Group 11

The most obvious contrast between grade nine and grade eleven participants was that almost all of the grade elevens responded that they had learned about sexual behaviours from experience.

> ...experience. Just by, just doing different things with your partner ... we just sit there and hold each other and ... He taught me that it does mean a lot. ... Cause it feels good and when you feel good about yourself, then, you just click better, I guess. Sherri (11/IC)

> Probably experience. Well, the first guy that I went out with, he was much more experienced than I was. He was quite a bit older, so, like, I probably learned from him. Karen (11/SA)

As adolescents began to experiment with their sexuality, their source(s) of information about sexual behaviours change. The sources of information for grade nines were friends and school, sometimes movies and magazines, not very often parents. By grade eleven, experience became the more predominant method of learning about sexual behaviours (Table 4). In other words, between grade nine and eleven, adolescents begin to experiment with sexual behaviours as a way of learning. The family is still not important as a source, and television and movies seem to increase as a source of information on sexual behaviours.

Table 4: Source of Information on Sexual Behaviours in Order of Importance as Discussed by Grades

Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
school	experience
friends	television/movies
movies/magazines	siblings
parents	mother
	critical of school & media

The more experience adolescents had, the less they relied on other sources of information regarding sexual behaviours (Table 5).

Table 5: Source of Information on Sexual Behaviours in Order of Importance as Discussed by Sexual Experience

Not Sexually Active	Sexually Active	Intercourse
school	experience	experience
friends	school	media/movies/TV
media/movies/TV	media/magazines	siblings
society	friends	
parents (not a lot)	first boyfriend	
	parents	

Quality of Sexual Experiences

As will be shown throughout the presentation of the results and discussion, the quality of sexual experiences seemed to change with maturation. In particular, Susan and

Sherri revealed how the quality of their relationships had changed.

Susan, whose first sexual intercourse was at twelve years of age, was motivated by curiosity. The experience was of sexual intercourse only, no experience of other sexual behaviours such as hugging, kissing, or petting occurred.

> It wasn't anything special,... [interviewer: and other sexual behaviours?] It wasn't there. No, that came later when I started having serious boyfriends. [int: so this first boy, was it an experiment like?] that's exactly what it was. Susan (11/IC)

Sherri also remarked on the change in her sexual experience and specifically noted a change in the affection that, at this point, clearly makes a difference.

> I didn't know much about anything and I didn't really know what all included sexual behaviours back then. Me and Chris have come a long way. It's a lot different. We do a lot more things. [int: in grade nine?] It was very limited, I think, minimal....there wasn't a lot of affection. we were young, shy, cautious about our bodies or whatever. [Int:it was more just the act of intercourse?] Yeah. [Int: you got involved in the different behaviours as you got older?] ...me and Chris, he showed me that, you know, just holding hands or touching that is important. I never knew how good it was, how [much] better it made the relationship, ...I never looked at the small things, I never thought they were that important. Sherri (11/IC)

In summary, the sexual behaviours defined by each of the participants seemed to be related to their maturity or cognitive development at the time. The older participants tended to include emotional, abstract qualities in their definitions of sexual behaviours. The grade eleven participants were more likely to have a more comprehensive definition of sexual behaviours.

The sources for defining sexual behaviours tended to be external sources such as friends and media in grade nine. By grade eleven, adolescents had begun to experiment and use internal locus of control, counting on their own experimentation to provide them with information on sexual behaviours. However, Susan and Sherri showed us that early experimentation is not always a positive experience.

The experiences of Susan and Sherri revealed an important change in the quality of their sexual behaviours. The relationship between age and quality of the experience seemed to be directly and positively related. The older the adolescents, the more positive the sexual experiences. These types of biographies could be a valuable addition to sex education programs.

Expectations

Each participant was requested to discuss what, if any, expectations existed for him/her with regard to sexual behaviours. In particular, participants were asked what expectations they felt their friends, culture, parents, school, church, media, and society had of them.

Peers

The grade nines had mixed responses. Most felt that most of their friends did not really have any expectations, others felt that the expectations depended on whether or not an individual had previously indicated that they were sexually active.

> ...probably expectations are to, at least, do something, but not, a few people, probably about one quarter, think that you should have sex. But not really many. David (9/NA)

> Uhm, not really, I don't think there is any expectations, just like if it happens, it happens, you know. John (9/SA)

> All my peers and family think that I'm going to wait till I'm married and stuff ... that's what most of my friends and family think. Craig (9/SA)

Although these three all indicated that there were no expectations from their friends to be sexually active, it is important to know that these three were friends. Therefore, they provided support for each other's ideas. These three did not impose expectations of sexual intercourse on each other and were not, themselves, sexually active. They have assumed the expectations and behaviours of their peer group or found a peer group that provided support for their own sexual limits.

The one grade nine female who had been sexually active, in fact had experienced sexual intercourse, had a different perception of her peers' expectations.

> And like your friends, they would probably expect you to have sex but they don't, like, they don't really force you. My friends don't force me and everything, but...Cheryl (9/IC)

The grade elevens were somewhat different. They began to identify that there were differences between individuals (and the groups that these individuals formed), that not everyone was the same and that not everyone expected the same sexual involvement of everyone.

> If, well it's kind of a, there's a group that doesn't date in high school and there's a group that does. It's not, like, white and black, but it's pretty close, so, like, you, you know, I know in high school who dates and who doesn't. And there's some people that don't believe in it and there's some people that do. So for the people that do date, there's more expectations because people understand that they do date and they do, do go out and then there's people that don't. So the expectations on the people that don't there isn't any, because the people know that, and understand that they don't, they don't do that. Brad (11/NA)

In contrast to the grade nines, the grade elevens said that they were not as influenced by the peer group in senior high school as they were in junior high school. Their intentions existed independent of others expectations.

> So it depends, I think you set expectations almost for yourself. As much as other people do for you. Based on whatever, nothing, nothing substantial or concrete, just based on what you feel at the time. It's not, not a lot of influence from other people in that. Brad (11/NA)

> ...I worry about what my friends think but I don't limit myself as to what I can and can't do because of them. Susan (11/IC)

> Nope, probably not, maybe a little bit, not, not enough to sway my decision or what I've been taught by my parents. Kevin (11/NA)

Responses also showed that, by grade eleven, adolescents were part of a peer group that, for the most part, shared their ideas regarding sexual behaviours. Whether they sought out other adolescents with similar beliefs, or were accepted by a certain group and chose to share their beliefs was unclear.

> ... my friends know what I do, and they don't expect me to do any more or any less. [int: they don't expect you to make the same choices as them?] No, not with my friends, anyway. Brad (11/NA)

> My friends' expectations aren't much different than what mine are for myself. Cause they don't know, they expect me to be, you know, have a stable relationship, I'm sure. They don't want me going from guy to guy and that's the same like how I feel about myself, so they don't have too many expectations, my friends ... Well, of course, how you present yourself again. I think they care about that too. If you dress up and expose yourself a lot, and your friends aren't like that, then they're going to tell you about it. Sherri (11/IC)

> Well, some of my friends are sexually active, but the majority of them aren't. But we sort of, I don't know, in my school it's kind of looked down not if you do. I mean, not for everybody, but, well, most people and, I don't know. So everybody sort of just says, no, don't do it. [int: even your friends that are sexually active, do they pressure you?] Not really. Just sort of, it's up to you, whatever you want. Karen (11/SA)

> Guys, their friends, they put pressure on them to go out and have sex too. Sometimes, not a lot, Like, I don't, like not from my friends, but some people, some people do. [int: do you find that #13?] No, not with my friends. Even if they did, I wouldn't listen to them. Focus Group 11

It seemed that each participant read the expectations of his or her peer group accurately. They did not feel pressured because they were part of a peer group that shared similar expectations. The following comments from the focus group, where the questions were less personal in that they asked about 'people in your age group' reflect the pressure to be sexually active. The dicussion evolved out of the question "Are a lot of young people your age involved in sexual behaviours?".

> It's not. They're not having a relationship, they're just having sexual relationship. They've not experienced the full feeling mainly because they just don't. They don't just get accepted sort of thing. Social among their peers. ... maturity to have a relationship. They might be performing like good sexual behaviours, but like she said, most of the kids these days just want to be accepted. So it doesn't like, they are not mature enough to get into a relationship. But they get into it. Yeah, it's usually short term. [Int: did you say bragging rights?] Yeah. Well, just, like, just I guess like if you have friends or something, whatever, just, like, just to be acceptable again, or accepted again, like, just so you can say, I've done this or whatever ... Just because you friends are doing it and you want to try, when they talk about it, be able to join the

> conversation and feel like you, feel like you're one of the crowd. Focus Group 11

Based on these findings, as adolescents develop, they recognize that there are individual differences. Furthermore, once they have established their group of peers, the pressure to be sexually active may, in fact, decrease if the adolescents' peer group does not support sexual activity. Contrary to the changing role of friends in setting expectations, the parents' role in setting expectations appears to be consistent over time.

Parents

All the grade nine participants indicated that their parents expected them to abstain from sexual activity (in particular sexual intercourse) until they were married, were an 'adult', or had met 'the right person'. The grade elevens, whether they were sexually active or not, knew that their parents preferred abstinence. In some cases, knowing that children are sexually active, parents set expectations regarding sexual activity.

> ... I don't want to do anything that would cause embarrassment or something, like do anything to my mom that would bother her. the first or second date, that I'm not going to go all the way or do anything, you know, that would just not be right that time. .if I am with somebody that I'll use protection or birth control, or whatever, and even just hugging and kissing and all that, that I won't do it to such an extreme, like in public, that I'll embarrass people, other people watching or something. Susan (11/IC)

> They expect me to use my head and not, not do something that I wouldn't do on a normal basis. And that's all they expect. Cause they know that I'm not going to go out and do something that I'm not supposed to do. Brad (11/NA)

> ... if I was still living at home, my parents wouldn't want me to have intercourse, but they

> know I do, so they can't really do anything about it. But their expectations are, like, I shouldn't have intercourse, I shouldn't be living with a man.... they wouldn't mind if it was just hugging and stuff. But I think intercourse is a big deal. Sherri (11/IC)
>
> ... you shouldn't be too, like, loose and stuff with yourself. you shouldn't be sexually active and same with my family, my parents kind of always stress that. And that you should respect your body and stuff like that. And that it's worth [waiting] till you're married. Karen (11/SA)

Parents set consistent and predictable expectations for adolescents. In contrast, the media sent very mixed messages.

Media

The confusion seemed to exist because of the conflict between the way the media portayed the sexual activities of the adolescent and the messages that they were trying to pass on with regard to safe sex. This was not unique to any particular age nor level of sexual activity. The following messages were received from the media with regard to the portrayal of sexual behaviours.

> Uh, well, like on music videos and stuff. It's just basically go all the way ...David (9/NA)
>
> To go crazy, I guess... Cause that's what lots of people think ... like old people and stuff like that, and on television, they [think] that we're just kids running around doing stupid stuff. Craig (9/SA)
>
> Well, they influence you , like, you watch a movie, like lots of the movies now they have lots of sex and everything in them and then, probably, I don't know, if they expect you to do anything, they just think either you do or you don't, I guess. Cheryl (9/IC)

> They assume that you do. [Interviewer: what do you think media portrays for people your age? Are people your age involved in sexual behaviours?] Yeah. Sometimes, Yeah. Usually older people. Focus Group 9

In contrast to the way sexual behaviours were portrayed, approximately half of the participants felt that the media supported abstinence.

> That I wait till I get married, or old enough. Shannon (9/NA)
>
> I think the media expects you, as I said before, not to have sex, because it's kind of a taboo almost. Brad (11/NA)
>
> ... they don't want teens having sex a lot when they're young, or at all actually, not till they have the education, cause the media's trying, like, they're trying to educate the people about AIDS more and more now. ... they don't think young people should be having sex without a condom. They've got to know about it and know what it can do to you. It can kill you. Sherri (11/IC)
>
> Well, like I said, they just say, like, just use a condom and stuff. They just sort of, probably just want to make money off you. Karen (11/SA)
>
> ... all these things on the tabloids and stuff, like that's, I don't know. That just makes you feel like you should protect yourself more in case anything like that happens to you. You know, probably won't because I'm only a teenager, but. [int; so sometimes the media, when you see something sad, there's no way I'm ever going to let that happen to me?] Exactly. ... it's just like, no, I'm never going to let that happen to me and if it does, I'm not going to let anybody know.[1] Susan (11/IC)

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[1] This response exemplifies two aspects of adolescent sexuality so often cited in the literature. First, that nothing is going to happen to her because she's 'only a teenager', and second, that if something like that did happen to her she would never let anybody know.

Society

The grade nines were more confused than the grade elevens when asked about the expectations of society. It was not clear to them exactly what was meant by 'society'. The grade nine focus group participants agreed that society expected them to abstain from sexual activity. The grade eleven participants often indicated that the media was the voice of society. Most often, the expectations of society were repetitive of the expectations presented by the media; do not be sexually active, but if you are, practice safer sex. It was also interesting to note that the double standard for sexual behaviours arose in the grade eleven focus group.

> I think that society plays a big role ... I think they [society] expects you not to have sex. More that they expect you to. Because it's not, I think , the society, the people that control society are older. And they kind of aren't realizing what's happening at, for teenagers, for some teenagers. Brad (11/NA)

> Yeah. Well, with the AIDS issue, I don't think they want them having sex at a young age, cause, just cause of the knowledge level, it's dangerous. [int: so society expects that young people don't have sex?] Yeah, until they know, like, until they have the knowledge about AIDS and stuff.Sherri (11/IC)

> [Had been discussing sleeping around as a risky behaviour] Like, especially where, like girls are involved. If a guy was to do that, you know. He'd be a hero. Right on. [int: what do you think of that?] Yeah I think that's...True again because society, ... Well, it's also like a guy [is] supposed to go out and do something, but a girl. See guys are supposed to do this. But girls who do it are sluts. Focus Group 11

> Well, society, kind of just says, be , be safe. And sometimes it just seems like, why not just be safe and have fun but, then my church and my family and my friends and everything sort of, kind of just comes over that and show me that it's

> wrong again. But sometimes, it just, you just feel, like, who cares, but. [int: so society basically is saying be safe, anything goes, but be safe?] Right. Just, like, use a condom and you're okay. Karen (11/SA)

As Karen's response showed, even though society said safer sex is okay, she was reminded by the expectations of her family and her church that abstinence was 'right'. Along with parents, the church was one of the most consistent and predictable sources of expectations for sexual behaviours. All respondents that were asked about expectations of the church replied abstinence until marriage. The least effective sources for setting expectations regarding sexual behaviour were the culture they belonged to and the school.

Culture and School

There were no responses from the grade nines regarding culture nor school[2] and none of the grade elevens felt that culture played a part in expectations. The expectations of the school were somewhat varied, but provide some insight into the school sexuality education programs.

> Yeah, I'd say school is important ... that's the same almost as society because everybody's around and you don't want to make a fool out of yourself or go too far or, you know. [int: so school is that the people at the school?] Yeah, that's what I mean. Susan (11/IC)

> I don't think the school ever approaches it all. ...they teach it in a course called CALM because they have to. But other than that, it's not brought up in any other course. They just expect, they, the CALM teachers know that teenagers do

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[2] This may, again, be the result of the grade nine participants inability to understand that expectations come from a 'school' or a 'culture' as opposed to individuals. The respondents often cited the expectations of their peers when asked about the expectations of the school.

> have sex and they just expect you to be safe and protect yourself. Brad (11/NA)

> ... they don't come down on you a lot at school. Like, if you dress abnormally, they won't tell you. You're not going to get sent home or whatever. Teachers don't really care about that. you wouldn't fool around in the hallways with your boyfriend. You know, if you'd hold hands walking down or a kiss now and then, those are expectations. Sherri (11/IC)

While these responses indicated that the schools did not have expectations of the students, a discussion from the grade eleven focus group indicated that the students would like more from the school sexuality education programs.

> [int: so you don't find the education is very direct?]
> No, like most of the things that we found, well for me, and like, I've learnt probably just, I learnt more outside of the classroom than I did inside the classroom. And I, I know that there are certain limits to the educational system, like it can't teach certain things in there, but I think, maybe, more information on ... like, relationships. they don't really talk about that, they just talk about the sex part. Like, they don't say, you're supposed to go out with somebody before you have sex. They just talk about sex. Yeah, they don't make it seem like sex is included in the relationship. Here's a relationship and here's sex. They are two completely different things, like, they don't combine each other. Like the emotional needs of your partner, or whatever. ... That's very true, they don't talk a lot about relationships. Or they don't even prepare you for what your own emotional needs are going to be. Or how you're going to be feeling. That's what I meant before, like, they don't talk about like how your body is going to react, so. Yeah. Like a lot of our feelings are unsure about. That's where school should be making it clear. [int: so more information about the relationships, how you'll feel when you're attracted to someone.] I think , more about the values behind sex rather than just sex. Well, sex shouldn't be as , like, making love. It's a form of closeness, or a bond. To

> express your unity. [int: okay, so do people, do you think people your age really think that way?] No. No. Not at all. Because a lot of people don't see sex, part of, as part of our relationship. Maybe they think that'll come later on in life or something. All they care about is sex. [int: do you think that's pretty common? This just caring about sex?] Yeah. Because that's all they've taught in school. And also they, society, they don't really talk about the emotional and the, the attraction or the love that has to be there. They mostly just portray the actions and what will happen and how it will happen and whatever, they, like, they don't show the relationship part of it. Focus Group 11

Should There Be More or Fewer Expectations?

When participants were asked whether there should be more expectations or fewer expectations, their responses were similar regardless of their age. Some felt that there were enough expectations to 'live up to', and some lightening of expectations may even help. For the most part, they were comfortable with the expectations. It must be noted here that some of these responses seemed to reflect expectations in more diverse areas of their life than strictly their sexual behaviours.

> Uh, I think they should be looser, probably. David (9/SA)#1

> Definitely. It would be a lot easier. John (9/SA)

> I don't [think] there's too many expectations. ... if there's fewer, it's okay, but I wouldn't want there to be more. [int: so those kinds of expectations about sexual behaviours are ones that you think should be dropped?] yeah. Brad (11/NA)

Although they said they did not feel pressure from their peers to be sexually active, the only expectation they wanted dropped was the expectation of peers that they be sexually active.

With the exception of fewer expectations from their peers, they seemed to appreciate the expectations. A few responded that it helped maintain some 'control'

> Is normal for parents to expect you no, not to be involved. [Interviewer: So would there be fewer expectations from your parents?] No. I don't think so. Because they're protecting their kids. Yeah it's just natural for them to. Cause they know more. Focus Group 9

> ... there's enough but not too much [int: do you think expectations help some control over what is happening?] Yeah, because if there was less expectations, then there would be more freedom to do, well, not like my jail, but there's be a lot more freedom and people would just go and do whatever. They wanted and that, like, you have to worry about things like diseases and stuff like that. Susan (11/IC)

> Sometimes I wish there was [fewer expectations], but I think it's good. Karen (11/SA)

In summary, the expectations of the various referents (parents, peers, school, etc.) did not change from grade nine to grade eleven (Table 6), with the exception of peers, at some times playing a more crucial role than at other times. Participants believed that their parents, the school, media, society, and church all expected them to abstain from sexual intercourse until they were, at least, older and in a mature relationship.

Table 6: Expectations By Grade

	Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
Peers	•To do something sexually, but only a few think you should have sex •Probably expect you to have sex	•Identify 2 groups. some do and some don't. •Not swayed by peers, all belong to groups that support their ideas of sexual activity •Mixed
Parents	•All feel parents expect abstinence until married, meet the right person, adult	•Be responsible •Avoid Embarassment •Parents don't want them to be sexually active but know the adolescents are.
School	•wait	•none except for in-school conduct such as restraint in the hallways
Media	•Portray sexually active adolescents but teach safe sex.	•Same as grade nine
Society	•Vague. Confusion about societal expectations. Tend to say society expects you to wait. Media reflects society.	•No sex, be safe.
Church Culture	•Abstinence	•Abstinence

The expectations of their peers varied based on grouping their responses by sexual experience (Table 7). Both grade nines and grade elevens said that they did not feel pressured by their peers to be sexually active. However, each of the participants was sexually active to the extent that they felt their friends expected them to be. When the participants were not sexually active, they did not think their friends expected them to be. When the participants were sexually active, they felt that there were qualifications regarding sexuality, qualifications such as not sleeping around or not exposing yourself.

Table 7: Expectations of Peers Grouped By Sexual Experience (Partial Quotes)

Not Sexually Active	Sexually Active	Sexual Intercourse
•only a few think you should have sex •Wait until I get married •They know what I do and don't expect any more	•I have no idea •Majority of friends are not sexually active	•Probably expect you to have sex •I don't worry about what my friends think [Expect] •Everybody says no, don't do it •To use protection •They don't want me going from guy to guy. Don't expose yourself

The only desired change in the number of expectations was a decrease in the expectations of their peers. Those expectations from the other referents, including parents, church, society, and media were seen as helpful in maintaining some 'control' over their sexual behaviours.

Values

Prior to the questions on values, each participant was provided with the following definition of values. "Values are things that are important to us. Values also act as standards. They are the things that help you to make decisions that are right for you"(Appendix 3). Following the definition an example was provided.

What Values Help You Make Decicions About Sexual Behaviours?

There were distinct differences between the grade nine and grade eleven responses to the question "What values help you make decisions about sexual behaviours?". The grade nine participants seemed to have difficulty thinking in abstract terms about what motivated their actions. Often, their responses reflected expectations more than their personal values. For example, rather than feeling that values such as abstinence or self respect were crucial to their decision not to be sexually active, they were more inclined to consider the consequences of their actions as the 'values' that help them make decisions regarding sexual behaviours. In terms of their cognitive development, this is not surpising. It is much more difficult to discuss abstract motivators such as values as opposed to the very immediate consequences of pregnancy or STDs with this age group.

When actual values *were* cited, the grade nines responded that they valued their health, avoiding pregnancy, and maintaining their life the way it was at that time.

> Well, if it's before you could use a condom, you know, get checked, if you're positive or negative for AIDS. And same with your partners, partner if they have any diseases or anything, that should be looked after. [interviewer; so what are the things, the values that you are thinking about when you say this? Is it health? Health issues, health values] yeah. Craig (9/SA)

> Well, I'd say health is a big part of it, like, you want to be careful so you don't get pregnant or you don't get some diseases or anything, I guess. Cheryl (9/IC)

> Maybe they value not to get pregnant. Well, maybe the way their life is now, like, they don't want to take a chance or. Get too involved. Focus Group 9

In contrast, the grade eleven participants said that honesty, trust, respect, caring, abstinence, and various emotional qualities were the values that effected their decisions.

> You have to be with somebody that you care about ... it's all right to experiment, but you don't have to be forced into it, if you don't want to. And so, I just, basically, made up my own mind from there that I'm a normal person and therefore, that's as far as I'll go. [int: so that you based your decisions on making your own choices and what you're comfortable with?] yeah, and also what my mom has taught me. Cause she's very open. Susan (11/IC)

> I think the value of, like, getting to know someone deep down, before you get into it heavy. Well, if it's a person whom I've met or whatever that I started seeing [things] I don't like, then I'm not going to get involved with them ... the way they live, their lifestyle, then, I wouldn't get involved. ... Well, if it's a good relationship. If it's healthy, you know. And expressive and stuff, then I would get involved. Honesty, trust, caring, affection. [int: would you call those values that would help?] Yeah. Cause to be honest, that's a value. To be loyal, that's a value. Sherri (11/IC)

> ... I respect myself too much probably, that's how my values are. Karen (11/SA)

Where Did You/Do You Get Your Values From?

The grade nines responded quite differently from the grade elevens when asked "Where do you get your values from?".

Peers

The peers have already been shown to be a source of information for adoescents in learning about sexual behaviours. The grade nines also identified friends as a source of values. By grade eleven, friends seemed to be used as more of a 'sounding board' for what the adolescents valued than as a source of values.

> ... and from my friends probably too. I have really good friends and they help me along and stuff. [int: and you talk a lot with your friends?] Right. [int: if you're in a dating realtionship do you talk to them quite a bit?] Yeah, when there's problems and stuff, I do talk to my friends about it. Karen (11/SA)

> ...friends can either persuade or dissuade you from what, you can believe in or whatever, cause they, if they talk about it enough, you can almost believe anything. Susan (11/IC)

Karen felt that her friends, her ability to seek out their help and reassurance regarding her relationships provided support. In contast, Susan commented on the persuasive ability of the peer group as an influence on her sexual behaviours. Closer examination of these two different perceptions of friends' influence revealed that Karen, who sought support had not had sexual intercourse, while Susan, who felt that friends can make you believe almost anything, had experienced sexual intercourse.

While both grade nines and grade elevens continued to see their peers as a valuable source of values, they had quite different impressions of the role that parents played in establishing their values.

Parents

When asked about the role of parents as a source of values, grade nines that mentioned their parents did not feel that there was much potential for open communication. They responded that their parents were 'not open to that'. In contrast, all of the grade elevens felt that their parents were a source of values. Furthermore, grade elevens had come to the realization that values they held at the time were, in fact, formed by the modeling that their parents had done in the past, as opposed to direct communication.

> My values would mostly come from my parents. A high percentage of them from my parents Brad (11/NA)

> Just because of what your parents tell you and then as you get older it depends on what your friends and people you hang, or, are around more, tell you and then you set your own according to that. Focus Group 11

> I think I got my values from my parents ... I think it's just basically what we believe, like, because, like, it's just sort of like an action, like they're showing us what they think is right and we're kind of like picking it up. Kevin (11/NA)

Church

Very few grade nine participants felt that church played any part in their values. Similarly, very few grade eleven participants felt that church had been a source of values. Those that did, made a point of distinguishing the church structure or organization from basic beliefs of their faith. In the following passage, Karen attempted to distinguish organized church from her basic religious beliefs.

> Well, I don't know if my church, like, the church part of it, but, like, just knowing what I'm, like, what I'm supposed to believe and everything, ...what my church stands for, but, I don't think it's like the people there that have done anything for me. I just, I know what's right and wrong, kind of. It's just been the idea of church and that, like Christian stuff and, ... the belief and stuff. Karen (11/SA)

School/Culture/Media

The school, an often cited source of information for sexual behaviours, was not perceived as a source of values, and neither were culture nor media.

Experience

Grade elevens cited one influence on values that the grade nines never did, experience.

> From experience, yeah, like past relationship... [int: so your values of honesty and trust?] Have come from experience. Sherri (11/IC)
>
> Sometimes from experiments and ... experience. Focus Group 11

Have Your Values Changed in the Past Three Years?

The grade nine participants felt that their values may have changed somewhat due to their change in attitude towards the other gender. The grade elevens felt that their values had not changed, but that there was a better understanding of what those values actually meant to them and a broadening of the range of values due to experience.

> I think they have because, like, when you're in junior high you don't, there isn't much of like that you've seen or experienced or done and well, right now I'm in high school and when you get there it's like everybody's doing different things and it's all right to experiment and to change around so, you feel a little bit more relaxed about what you're doing, you don't have to worry so much. ... you don't have much of a chance to experiment or experience anything, like when you're in junior high you're pretty young. And then so, I guess you're a little bit prudish almost about what you think is right and so when you get to high school, there's a lot more things that are acceptable. Susan (11/IC)
>
> I think they've broadened out a little bit as far as what I, what my values are. ...honesty and caring mean something different than they did in

> junior high. Yeah, I'd say they're more valuable and mainly cause I know more about them. Like in grade 7,8, and 9, I just kind of knew, I knew the definition of them, and now I know what they mean more [int: from experience?] Yeah. Brad (11/NA)

> ...I guess in junior high you went out with someone just to be with someone. It wasn't like, honesty and trust and stuff wasn't a huge big deal, cause, ... I've had more experience since then too. .Sherri (11/IC)

> ... I wasn't really into dating people when I was younger, like, it was more in high school that I dated people so I didn't, was, sort of naive too, so, they've changed probably. There wasn't really much there and I just, kind of, you know, thought why would you want to do that. [int: so do you think your values have changed because of your experiences?] Probably. Karen (11/SA)

Will Your Values Change In The Future?

When asked whether or not their values would change in the future, the responses were as follows. Most of the grade nines felt that their values would change only in relation to their growing independence and 'search' for someone to spend their future with.

> Yeah for sure, because like, even in high school, like, in grade twelve, like you're getting ready to , like, live your own life and move out of home...you're trying to meet someone ...John (9/SA)

> Well they might a little bit, I guess, cause, you're getting more mature and everything. Different things influence you later. Cheryl (9/IC)

> ... if it would, it would probably be when I started like, like full time job and like really, like life after high school or university whenever ...Just probably living independently. David (9/SA)

> Yeah. I think they will change. Well, I don't know, cause maybe once like, out of high school

> and you'd be going to University or whatever, you think you're more, maybe more mature and grown up and you might have different ideas about it, maybe more experience. Focus Group 9

The grade nine responses also reflected uncertainty of the effects that their peers may have on their values. Again, they may have, in fact, been thinking more about their intentions than their values.

> Like, if they are the same friends, then they'd probably have the same idea of everything. Depends, like, what like, like what people they're around. Focus Group various

> ... when I get older stuff may change like. I might have sex before marriage, you never know [Interviewer: What might make you change your mind about sex before marriage?] Peers, like peer pressure and stuff like that. Alcohol too, you know, if I get drunk and, and something happens and I can't stop that. Craig (9/SA)

In contrast, when grade elevens were asked whether their values would change in the future, most of them indicated that their values may change, but only a little. They seemed to feel that their values were strong, set by their experiences and only likely to change because of future experiences.

> ...I have stronger beliefs [now], because I feel my friends around me, just following a part and doing what everybody else is doing. ... in junior high you do worry a lot about what other people think and in senior high it's the same, that you're starting, like, that's when you learn to be yourself. Susan (11/IC)

> I don't know. Probably because when you get older, you're closer to, like trying to find someone to be with forever, but I don't know. Karen (11/SA)

In summary, the values seemed much more related to age than sexual experience. The grade nines lacked the ability to think abstractly about the values that influenced their behaviours, or consider values as possible reasons to consider when making decisions. They were more inclined to think of the immediate results, considering the consequences of their actions. It was like they were more reactive than proactive in their thinking about sexual activity.

Similarly, their source of values differed dependent on their age. Although peers were constant over time, always seen as playing a part in helping them define their values, parents were recognized more by the grade eleven participants than grade nines for the role they played in modeling values through their actions. The past and potential change in their values also varied dependent on the participants' grade.

The grade nine participants believed that their values would change with growing independence and maturity. It was their perception that, as they mature and become more independent, their values may change as they search for a future spouse or serious relationship. In contrast, the grade eleven participants felt that their values, for the same reasons as the grade nines, will broaden and become more well defined, but not change, with experience.

Table 8: Values Reported By Grade

Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
•Health •Avoid Pregnancy •AIDS/STDs •Don't take chances •Don't change their life now	•Care About Person, •Make own Choices, Sexual Limit Setting •Know partner well •Honesty •Trust •Caring •Affection •Loyalty

Attitudes

Prior to answering questions on their attitudes towards sexual behaviours, each participant was provided with the following definition of attitudes. "Attitudes are your feelings about things. For example, young people can feel positive, neutral, or negative about school. At the same time, people can have attitudes about things they don't do" (Appendix 3).

What Attitudes Do You Have About Sexual Behaviours?

Although most of the grade nines had not been sexually active, whether they had begun to experiment with their sexuality or not, they did note their changed attitude toward the other gender. It was not uncommon for the grade nine participants to discuss the fact that, since grade six, instead of feeling that the other gender was undesirable, they began to be curious, and wanted to establish friendships.

> Well, I used to think like all girls are gross. Now I realize there are some different, you know, they're just different than what they used to be, they don't have kooties or anything. Craig (9/SA)

> Oh yeah, a lot, because, like when I was in grade six, like I didn't think of girls like the way I do now, you know. They were just like friends and stuff. Now I'm looking more long term kind of thing, so, yeah. John (9/SA)

> In grade six, you don't think about having sex with somebody, you really don't value your health in the same way. Cheryl (9/IC)

Grade nine participants had difficulty answering questions about their attitudes towards sexual behaviours, as opposed to their attitudes towards the other gender. Quite often, their responses reflected their intentions regarding sexual behaviours rather than their attitudes towards sexual behaviours.

> ... probably that they aren't good to get involved with until you're, until you're married. [Interviewer: Do you feel fearful of such behaviours?] Not really. I just don't think you should do it. David (9/SA)

> well, I think people should, should wait. [Interviewer: So like how do you feel then? Worried, afraid, excited, happy?] Worried, I guess ... I just don't think they're right. Shannon (9/NA)

When probed somewhat by the interviewer to clarify their 'feelings' about sexual behaviours, some of them expressed apprehension and emotions that were likely reflective of discomfort since they were not 'ready' for certain sexual experiences, nor had experienced them.

> Well about hugging and kissing, I think, you'd probably be happy if. And well sexual intercourse, you'd probably be pretty worried and scared stiff. Cheryl (9/IC)

> I think it would depend on the person, like, some people, I don't know, depending on how they were brought up or, whatever, they might feel worried or they wouldn't like, I don't, negative or whatever. Negative towards it. Focus Group p4

> Might be worried about what people think of them. Would be worried. If they're going to get pregnant. They might be afraid. Focus Group p5

> Well, a person would be happy, well maybe. But afterwards, you start thinking, feel guilt. Like maybe you'd done, like the wrong thing or something. Focus Group

Cheryl had more positive attitudes towards sexual behaviours and was sexually active. Participants that had been sexually active were more likely than those that had not been sexually active to comment on the type of relationship. For the most part, the grade elevens had positive attitudes towards sexual behaviours as long as they were comfortable with the person, the relationship, and the behaviours.

> ... if you really like the person or even love them, then you do whatever you want, but if you're, if you're just using the person, then don't do it. [Int: Would you feel bad about certain behaviours?] Uhm no, not if I really liked the person or whatever, then I'd feel pretty good about it. But if I was just using somebody, no I'd feel like crap. [Interviewer: Have you ever felt worried?] Uhm, not really. Just like, whatever happens, happens. John (9/SA)

> Okay, well I think, well hugging and kissing and all that, that I think that's great. That's , you know, if I see somebody doing that I'm not, I think it's fine, it's normal. Susan (11/IC)

> If it's all the way to sex, I, I, that's not for me. ... I don't think you have to know everything at this age. [int: so you're not afraid of them?] No. [int: or worried?] Just happens and I just take it as it comes, kind of. [int: you're comfortable?] Yeah, I'm comfortable. Brad (11/NA)

> I think that as the older you get the more you come, you become aware of, you become used to hugging and kissing as, when you were in junior high, it was kind of too far out. Whereas right now, sex for me is too far out. So I kind of developed through the stages, you could say.

> [int: junior high kissing was not for you?] No, and now that I am in high school it is for me and then when I'm twenty five or something, then sex might be for me or when I'm twenty... Brad (11/NA)

> [kissing?] I think it's okay. I don't think there's a problem with it as long as it's done, not in a sexual way, like, it's not part of the act or whatever. Like, just as, like, just showing your, your compassion or whatever, like, just at the end of a date or something like that. ... if it's going to be part of the, the act, I don't feel so hot towards it. [int: you're comfortable with kissing and hugging as long as it's not a part of leading to or a part of intercourse at your age?] uh, huh. If I was married, that would be fine. Kevin (11/NA)

> [int: let's say hugging and petting and holding?] I think that's very positive, cause it does help a relationship, cause if you don't have that the, just, you're not as close, you know, as you should be and that goes, like, if you're not as close then you don't express yourself as much, but if there's a lot of sexual behaviours then you feel comfortable and good about the person and about yourself, then you can express you feelings more. [int: so you feel good about all behaviours you're involved in?] Uh huh. Sherri (11/IC)

> I think they're good [sexual behaviours] as long as you're comfortable with what you do. Like, for everybody it's different. For me, if I feel used, then I just hate it, just like, I wish it would just go away, you know, but if, if it's alright with me then I think it's okay. [int: it depends on who you're with?] Right. [int: what the relationship's like?] uh huh. Karen (11/SA)

In summary, all the participants agreed that hugging and kissing were 'great'. When participants were asked about sexual intercourse, responses were mixed. When grouped according to grade, the grade nine participants were quite similar in their responses, while the grade elevens were quite mixed (Table 9). This prompted the grouping of responses by experience in order to establish trends based on experience.

Table 9: Attitudes Towards Sexual Behaviours by Grade (Partial Quotes)

Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
•aren't good to get involved in attitudes •I just don't think they're right •guilt, maybe done the wrong thing •worried I'll get pregnant •negative, afraid •curious •If I really like the person, good, if I was using them, like 'crap'	•Not afraid, just not for him •As you get older, to more extensive sexual behaviours will be good •Okay, as long as it's not done in a sexual way [as part of sexual intercourse] •Good as long as you're comfortable •Hugging and Kissing are fine, normal •Hug and kiss is very normal, positive cause it help you get closer.

The responses that were grouped based on sexual experience were more uniform within the groupings (Table 10). This would seem to indicate that attitudes towards sexual behaviours were related more to experience than age. However, as experience of the participants in this sample increased with age, it was difficult to be sure whether the change in attitude was related more to experience or age. The experience influenced their attitude, in particular their apprehension about sexual intercourse.

Most of the participants who had not been sexually active, had negative attitudes towards sexual behaviours beyond hugging and kissing, or any behaviours that were considered precursors to sexual intercourse and sexual intercourse (fear, guilt). It would seem that these participants had made the decision that these sexual behaviours were not something that they would be comfortable with, and had never continued their sexual behaviours beyond hugging and kissing.

In contrast, those that had been sexually active or experienced intercourse did not mention their attitude towards sexual intercourse at all.

Table 10: Attitudes Towards Sexual Behaviours by Sexual Experience (Partial Quotes)

Not Active	Sex. Active	Sexual Intercourse
•aren't good •I just don't think they're right •Not afraid, intercourse is just not for him •Hug and kiss, as long as it's not done in a sexual way •If you like or love the person, do whatever you want	•good as long as you are comfortable	•Hugging and kissing are fine, normal. •Hugging and kissing positive cause it can help you get closer

Where Did You/Do You Get Your Attitudes About Sexual Behaviours From?

Participants were requested to discuss who they felt had influenced their values, in particular values that may effect their decisions regarding sexual involvement.

Peers

When asked where their attitudes came from, friends were mentioned by almost all of the grade nines, but very few of the grade elevens. John(9/SA) also remarked on the changing influence of the peer group over time.

> lots from my peers too, like the way they treat other people. [Interviewer: Do you think at a certain age of your life they would be more influential?] Uhm, probably right now it's more influential, cause like in a few years, I won't care what anybody thinks cause I'll try to live my own life, so right now I'd say they're the most. John (9/SA)

> ...our friends, I guess they, if they've had sexual intercourse before and they tell you everything about it and then you get, you're curious and everything. Focus Group 9

School/Church

With one exception, neither teachers nor church were sources of values. Neither grade nine nor grade eleven participants, when asked about their attitudes, mentioned the school or church.

Parents

The grade nine participants indicated that their parents had some impact on their attitudes

> Cause your parents it's , I guess it's bad, before you're married or a certain age and then you're scared about it like, what's so wrong and everything. Cheryl (9/IC)

By grade eleven, participants recognized the impact that parental modeling had on their attitudes. For each of the responses, the implication was that their attitudes were not shaped by direct lessons in attitudes, but by their observation of sexual behaviours.

> Well, as I said, my family and my friends, again, and also from, like, watching TV and reading books, you get a lot of different ideas on what is acceptable and what's not. Even for myself, like, if I'm, I don't, a lot of things that are not acceptable for me I get, like I see something like that on TV and I'm thinking I could never do that. Susan (11/IC)

> Just from my parents and peers and what, I think society thinks in this one too ... you follow what society thinks, because you don't, haven't had a really lot of time to base your own opinion. Yeah, I think it comes from the media too, because they can portray what is good and what is bad. [int: it has influenced your attitudes?] Yes. Brad (11/NA)

Experience

As was the case when values were discussed, grade eleven participants said that experience played a role in the development of their attitudes towards sexual behaviours.

> From being there, like, with me and Chris, I feel all these things. That's where I get them from. [int: so from experiences?] Yeah. [int: what about your attitude toward anal intercourse, where did you get that from?] I think, just about, just when I heard what it was. I didn't like it. I'm not exactly sure why. [int: you just made your own decision then?] Yeah. I just don't feel comfortable with it. Sherri (11/IC)

> ...experience, probably just what I've seen in my life from other people and their relationships and stuff like that. ...I know some people that have been, like, sexually abused and stuff and then it just sort of turns, like of turns me off but, also

> I've seen wonderful relationships, so, it's kind of been from experience and what other people have had. Karen (11/SA)

Have/Will Your Attitudes Change?

Most of the participants, whether grade nine or grade eleven felt that their attitudes had changed since leaving grade six or grade nine respectively. Grade nines noted that their attitudes about sexual behaviours had changed due to the change in their attitudes about the other gender.

> Uh, yeah. Like again, in grade six I wasn't like, I wasn't looking at girls like, like that, so. John (9/SA)

> I never thought about sex or anything like that. Grade six, but now, it's kind of getting to me. Craig (9/SA)

> yeah, I guess, cause in grade six I didn't kiss guys or anything. ... I wasn't really curious or I wasn't happy or excited or anything, I just, you didn't think about it then. And now, you do. Cheryl (9/IC)

Grade elevens' attitudes had changed more as a result of their experiences. This trend is consistent with findings related to their definitions of sexual behaviours and values.

> Yeah, because back then, us, the only thing we thought of as sexual behaviour was, oh, she kissed him, you know. And now it's so completely different [int: so how did the feelings change seeing someone kiss?] Well, we just thought it was like, wow, you know, I can't believe she did that, she actually kissed him. [int: whereas now?] it's just, it's just part of life, it's always there, you always see it everywhere you go, so. ...I find it completely ordinary. Susan (11/IC)

> I learned more and I know more than I did in junior high just because of experience again. Brad (11/NA)

> [attitudes have] just become more important to me since I've experienced it. So they haven't changed really. Well, in junior high, like, I imagined it, you know, how I would like it to be. And they were the same back then. Sherri (11/IC)

> ... I like it better now ... because I've had boyfriends and stuff but, I think I was just kind of naive in junior high. [int: so there's been a big change in terms of what you know and what you've experienced?] Right.Karen (11/SA)

When asked if their attitudes would change in the future, the grade nines expected that their personal experiences would make a difference in their attitudes towards sexual behaviours, but they were not sure exactly what the impact might be.

> Yeah, but not as much as they did from grade six to now. Uhm, probably get like wiser and, just like know, know how to do things a lot better and that kind, kind of thing. John (9/SA)

> Oh they might, yeah, probably a little bit. You might not be as curious anymore cause you know what happens and. Depends on the person you're with, if you, if you really like somebody and then you kiss them and everything you're probably going to happy but, just depends on, like, the person and everything. Cheryl (9/IC)

> They might because... You have more responsibility and think things through because you're older. Focus Group 9

In contrast to grade nines, almost all of the grade eleven participants thought that their attitudes would remain the same.

> I think they'll probably stay quite like, near the same. [int: since you've been in senior high school you've really come to understand or you really feel comfortable with the attitudes that you have?] Uh huh. Susan (11/IC)

Brad (11/NA) believed that his attitudes would continue to change. It may be that Brad(11/NA) responded more similarly to the grade nine sample than the grade eleven sample, due to the fact that he had very little experience in sexual behaviours and was still struggling to identify what his attitudes towards sexual behaviours were at the time.

> Yes, because they change as I get older, just like when I was in junior high, they've changed from junior high, so I think they'll change until forever, because I'll just learn more. Brad (11/NA)

In summary, participants source of attitudes is repetitive of their sources of values. The grade eleven participants were more likely than the grade nine participants to recognize the fact that their parents had provided them with attitudes through modeling. As with the values, experience played a big part in helping the grade elevens establish their attitudes.

Grade nine participants were more likely than grade eleven participants to believe that their attitudes would change over the next few years due to maturation and experience. Grade elevens believed that they had experienced enough and felt that they had established their attitudes already.

However, when asked if their attitudes had changed in the past few years, all the respondents, regardless of grade, reported that there had been changes. These changes were believed to be the result of experience and age.

Sexual Limit Setting

A quote from Karen (11/SA) provides a good introduction to this section on sexual limit setting.

> Not intercourse or anything like that, but I've had boyfriends, yeah. I sort of thought about it, just sort of, so that like, before I go out with someone I sort of, kind of in my mind I sort of set a limit for myself. Karen (11/SA)

Sexual Behaviours You Should Get Involved In

The first question that provided some insight into the sexual limit setting of adolescents asked what sexual behaviours they felt they should be involved in. All the respondents, from both grade nine and grade eleven, indicated that whatever sexual behaviours an individual was comfortable with were okay. The difference between the two grades was the kind of behaviours that they were comfortable with.

Very few grade nines felt that they should not be involved in any sexual behaviours whatsoever. For those that felt some sexual behaviours were okay, the qualification was that they must be comfortable and want to be involved with the other person.

> Not too deep. I think whatever you feel comfortable with except for not like... I don't think you should be involved like, really sexually. David (9/SA)

> ...it's up to the individual person, ... you should just do whatever you want to do. David (9/SA)

> Holding hands. Hugging. Hugging, kissing, like. Basically what the stuff said. [Interviewer: hold hands, hugging, kissing?] Yeah. Focus Group

Based on the focus group discussion, grade nine participants were comfortable with holding hands, hugging, and kissing.

By grade eleven, participants varied more in their 'comfort level' with various behaviours. The variation seemed to depend, to a large extent, on previous personal experiences.

Sexual Behaviours That Are Wrong For You

The participants were consistent in their responses when they were asked what sexual behaviours would be wrong for them. Those participants who were most conservative with regard to what behaviours were okay were also most conservative when asked what sexual behaviours would be wrong for them. For example, those that said hugging and kissing were acceptable sexual behaviours were consistent in saying that sexual intercourse before marriage or anything beyond hugging and kissing were not acceptable sexual behaviours for them.

It was interesting to see that the focus group discussion was somewhat different from individual interview responses. Although most of them felt that anything beyond hugging and kissing was wrong, consensus during the focus group discussion was contradictory to this.

> ... everything's acceptable for our age, like by people our age. Like who you are, like some people think it is. Depends how close, I guess, you are. Depends who the person is. And how long you've been seeing. Everybody accepts everything. [Interviewer: Does the group agree to that?] Yep.
> Focus Group 9

Cheryl, who had been sexually active had a different opinion than other grade nine participants that had not been sexually active. Further examination of the data revealed that, more than age of the participants, it was their sexual experiences that had made a difference in their idea of what sexual behaviours were right or wrong for them personally. Participants that were sexually active responded similarly and participants who were not sexually active responded similarly, regardless of whether they were in grade nine or eleven.

The following grade eleven participants had not been sexually active and had more conservative ideas of what sexual behaviours were wrong for them than grade elevens who had been sexually active.

> I think it's whatever I feel comfortable with and at my age right now, I don't think that having sex would be right for me. I think it's a personal choice. Brad (11/NA)

> ...I would not do anything like, sexually oriented until I was married. So I, I'd probably like hold hands or maybe kiss or hug or stuff like that, to just show my affection but I wouldn't do anything beyond that. Kevin (11/NA)

As noted above, the sexually active participants, regardless of their age, responded similarly.

> ...everything if I'm comfortable with somebody, then I can, I can do almost anything with them ... I don't like all sorts of different things, you know, I like normal things. [Int: man on top, woman below] yeah. [Int: so the sexual behaviours that you think you should get involved in are the hugging and the kissing and what we could call normal sexual intercourse] yeah. Susan (11/IC)
> It's whatever you choose, of course. [int: you should be able to get involved in whatever you choose?] Well, whatever you feel comfortable with. Show the other person that you care. That the both of you, that you know that the other person, it makes them feel good, which is good for both of you cause then they give you something that makes you feel good. Sherri (11/IC)

> [int: so anything that you're comfortable with, other than intercourse?] Yeah, basically. Karen (11/SA)

> Like, if you know them really well then, and you understand each other's feelings and like you feel really strong about each other, and I, I wouldn't

> think there's very much that would be really wrong, I guess. Cheryl (9/IC)

Behaviours Are Appropriate Depending on The Types of Relationships

Regardless of their experiences, all grade eleven focus group participants agreed on the importance of the relationship in determining what sexual behaviours were wrong and what sexual behaviours were okay.

> [int:depending lot on the relationship?] Yeah. You should look more towards sex as being more serious. Like, it's more a big thing than just. Just say doing it. Yeah. It's an act of love. Or it should be. Yes. Focus Group

The next question participants were asked was "what kind of behaviours are appropriate and inappropriate for a first date, and what kind of relationship should the couple have if they plan to be sexually active?".

When asked what kind of relationship they should have to be involved in sexual behaviours that were acceptable for them, responses were consistent with what was indicated in establishing what sexual behaviours were okay. For both the grade nines and elevens, there had to be a long term relationship, with genuine affection for the other person, good communication, and honesty. David thought that he would definitely have to be married.

The following responses showed some variation in the relationship they defined, but they were also talking about different sexual behaviours. Sherri said that there should be a solid relationship, but she was also talking about sexual intercourse. Karen said there should be a friendship first, but she was not considering sexual intercourse. Her sexual behaviours were limited to hugging, kissing, and petting.

> I think the relationship should be really, like, solid, if you're going to go into a lot of, a lot of different sexual behaviours. ...should both feel comfortable about it ... be honest with your feelings and how you feel about different things, like, in the relationship. Sherri (11/IC)

> well, I think it should be a friendship and yeah, like I've had some where I haven't really been friends with the guy before and it doesn't, it just doesn't work as well and my last boyfriend, we were really good friends before and so we just kind of, like, it didn't really, I don't know, we just got along really well and it wasn't, any, any pressure or anything. Just seemed natural. Karen (11/SA)

Each participant varied somewhat, dependent on their definition of sexual behaviours. However, the focus group discussion reflected the unity of thought with regard to emotional commitment, comfort, and familiarity.

> ... long term and the fact that they might or might not be in love. But as long as they like feel. Believe it. If they feel something for this, for this person and it's not just like a one night stand or whatever. Well, if they feel that then it's going to help them to express their feelings more, and so, if they are in love it'll click with the other person's feelings. [int: so we're talking mostly long term relationships, in love?] Yes. [int: what about chemistry, what does that mean to you?] Well, I have had, like, I've clicked with a couple of people but it doesn't mean that I want to go out and do whatever, ...And I think the longer the relationship goes on, the better the chemistry gets too, because you get to know each other and better just understand. Focus Group 11

The participants from both grades remained consistent in their responses when asked what sexual behaviours they felt were okay for a first date. As was the case when participants identified sexual behaviours that were okay and sexual behaviours that were wrong, sexual behaviours that were okay for a long term relationship were not the same behaviours that were okay on a first date. Some of the reasons for postponing sexual behaviours beyond holding hands and kissing were because they had seen a lot of people break up over sex, people were 'wasting it all on the first date', and because there would be nothing to look forward to in the future.

> .. if you were just to go out and have intercourse on the first date, I think that ruins everything. Cause you should get to know the person, really well before you have intercourse, especially these days, like with AIDS and stuff. (Sherri (11/IC)), and

> I think you have to sort of, like, get trust for each other first, before you do anything, I don't know, really big. I don't know, it just seems sort of stupid if you just kind of give yourself all at once. Karen (11/SA)

Risky Sexual Behaviours

Sexual limit setting also had to do with what behaviours adolescents thought were risky. If the behaviours were identified as risky, perhaps there would be greater motivation to avoid these behaviours. The term 'risky' meant a number of things to participants. Judging by their responses, potential risks were getting pregnant, getting AIDS, getting 'carried away', and getting caught with multiple partners. Although most grade nines cited intercourse without protection or a condom as a risky behaviour, somtimes their concern was avoiding pregnancy, sometimes avoiding AIDS.

> By having intercourse and you obviously don't want to get STD's or any diseases or anything so. Focus group 9

> Uhm, definitely sex without a condom or any other type of birth control or that's, that's basically

> about it. Sex with like a condom or type of birth control is still not very risky but there's still chance of pregnancy so that's still risky. But not like oral sex or anything like that, that's not risky at all, I don't think. John (9/SA)
>
> Risky. If the person has AIDS. If you don't use a condom Craig (9/SA)
>
> ...you don't want to get pregnant, then you're taking a risk. By having intercourse and you obviously don't want to get STDs or any diseases or anything so. Focus Group

David(9/SA) felt that condom use was a risky behaviour. Obviously, from his comments, his greatest concern was avoiding pregnancy.

> Condom use is risky. (Interviewer: why do you say that?) [A] lady was explaining all this scientific studies about condoms and how they don't work that great, so I would never trust one. David (9/SA)

In another case, condom use was qualified by how familiar you were with the person, showing that there was comfort in familiarity. Perhaps without intending to do so, Cheryl revealed that the risky sexual behaviour was, in fact, assuming that familiarity reduced the chance of exposing oneself to risk.

> ...like having sexual intercourse with someone you don't know very well without using protection. A condom. Cheryl (9/IC)

Cheryl was not alone in thinking that knowing the other person made a difference.

> Getting too involved with somebody if you don't know them very good. Cheryl (9/IC)
>
> Just not knowing the person too well, maybe. Yeah. Getting too close to them when you don't know them. Focus Group

The other aspect of sexual behaviours that was considered risky, aside from AIDS and pregnancy, was that certain sexual behaviours put participants 'at risk' for becoming more involved than they intended.

> Uhm, sex, oral sex, just, yeah. Not petting really except that it can get you to want to do that. David (9/SA)
>
> [Interviewer: do you think people your age think that petting is a risky sexual behaviour?] Well, it depends on what kind of environment you're in. If you're alone, well. It would depend on your feelings toward it. Yeah. If you feel comfortable then it's risky, I guess, but. [Interviewer: okay, so anything that makes you uncomfortable is a risky sexual behaviour?] Yeah. Focus Group various

It was interesting to note that David felt that certain behaviours were risky, depending on the environment in which the behaviour took place. This showed how much the situation influenced the adolescents, even when they planned to engage in sexual limit setting stopping short of having sexual intercourse.

Grade elevens had similar responses to grade nines, citing health risks such as AIDS, STDs and pregnancy as potential consequences of risky behaviours. Where there were differences, they were subtle and only detected by the researcher because of the familiarity with participants histories.

For that reason, some histories will be presented that help explain the participant's perception of risky behaviour. These histories will be made more explicit in the sections that follow.

Sherri had some very strong feelings about risky behaviours. At a very young age, she took a chance travelling out of province with an older male and was the victim of a prostitution plan.

> Risky is just getting involved with someone that, how to put this. I think, you know that it's wrong, like, deep down you have doubts about it, but you get into it anyway, cause, either, whether it be curiosity or just wanting to. I think that's risky, cause you don't know what you're getting into. Uh huh, yeah, like in, like in my situation I was curious, then I wanted to , like, I wanted to see Vancouver, you know, Christmas holidays weren't that exciting, so and that was risky, like, I knew deep down that I shouldn't, cause there was a lot of risk to it. going there with someone I barely knew. Sherri (11/IC)

Karen was the only participant that identified emotional as well as the physical risks. Again, these are the types of experiences that should be included in sexuality education programs, thinking ahead for an age group that does not, and providing insight to a population of educators that, relative to teenagers, had their first intimate experiences some time ago.

> Being with anybody , like, that you don't know. You don't know their background really. ... jumping into a relationship ...just for the fun of it, you know. Not really caring about yourself.... not really respecting your body and stuff. I think those are kind of risky. Not only just ,like, for physicalness but just for yourself, like, I don't know, I think it would sort of change what I feel about everything too, if I was sexually active.... just less respect and less, you don't have as much, it seems. Karen (11/SA)

Avoiding Risky Sexual Behaviours

The final questions with regard to risky sexual behaviours were "what can you do to avoid risky behaviours?" and "can others help you prevent risky behaviours from happening?" The grade nines said that one solution was to avoid sexual behaviours completely, by making sure you are "in the open, don't hide, and back away if you are uncomfortable" (Focus Group). If they were going to be sexually active, grade nines recommended checking the person out for health problems, buying top of the line condoms, and knowing the person well before getting involved. Unfortunately, there were no responses recorded from grade elevens about how they, personally, could avoid risky sexual behaviours. However, both grade nines and elevens answered as follows to the question "Can others help you prevent risky behaviours from happening?".

Grade nines often indicated that others could give advice, try to help one see what one is doing wrong, tell one the consequences of one's actions, and suggest methods of birth control. The 'others' included family, friends and school.

The grade nines believed that parents could be most effective by enforcing some rules and providing information on the potential consequences of the adolescents' actions.

> Maybe your parents. Talk to you about everything more, like, if your parents don't talk to you anything about, like, the risks involved, then you won't know. Cheryl (9/IC)

> [parents] setting standards and rules about what you can do. Tell you what the consequences could be. ...Your parents could not let you go out someplace where they think anything might happen. ... cause they've already been there and they know what can happen. Focus Group

In contrast, grade elevens assumed responsibility for preventing risky behaviours more than grade nines. Almost all of them were honest about the fact that, ultimately, it was up to them to make the decision to practice safer sex. They believed that if they intended to be sexually active at all, "other people can't stop you from sleeping around, cause if you're going to do it, then you're going to do it, there's nothing anybody can say or do that'll make you stop (Susan (11/IC))". The grade eleven participants also acknowledged that their partners should share the responsibility and assist them in avoiding risky sexual behaviours.

> [your partners], if they have some kind of disease, ...they can wear protection and make it known to you that they have a certain disease, like it would be nice. Yeah, if there was much more openness in the relationship, like, cause a lot of people they just. ...have sex just to have sex like, there's no relationship behind it. And it's times like that, that there's no protection. Usually. That's how diseases usually get spread and started. And if people would just use protection, then we wouldn't have to worry as much. Susan (11/IC)

> If I was with someone, and they could probably prevent it, by doing the same that that I would do and just not letting it happen. But outside forces, I don't think could prevent it. Brad (11/NA)

In order to act in a responsible way, grade elevens reported that knowledge and guidance are required. They acknowledged the role of parents and schools in providing information and guidance.

> Education on know how to, put on a condom or something. If you got into that situation. [int; you're responsible for your own behaviour, that's what you're saying?] Yes. [int: how can education help?] I think if you know how to protect yourself or know what's right and know that you probably shouldn't be sexually active with someone you don't really know. If you know that, like

> you're not born knowing these things. Yeah, either at school or through your parents or someone. Brad (11/NA)

> well, your parents can help you. Just by educating you and telling you what everything , like, what AIDS is about and what sex is about and teachers can help. Like, in your sex ed. classes. [int: educating about safe sex?] uh huh [int: or anything else they can educate you about?] About what a relationship's about. And what, like, I guess, they can't tell you what you're supposed to be feeling but they can. I guess, they can help to realize what you want out of a relationship. Sherri (11/IC)

Beyond the close knit world of home and school, grade elevens stated that society played a part in helping to encourage safe sexual behaviours. Some of the responses from the grade elevens reflected their need for public acceptance of their behaviours in order to open up the lines of communication, as well as their access to such aids as condoms and birth control.

> Yeah, others can prevent, well some of them. Because like, from diseases, you can, like, condoms are handed out to people at high school and you can buy them more easily than you used to be able to. And birth control, like that's, others can help you get that Susan (11/IC)

> Anyone that had the information or knowledge and was willing to pass it on to you. Well, there's a radio show if that counts. Yeah, they give you pretty good information. I've only listened to it a couple of times, like. It's basically just people phoning in with sexual problems and she tries to help them. [int: do you find that helpful?] I guess so, if, if the information is there, I've heard of it, like, stuff, like that there. I just heard of other things but. [int: any other sources?} Doctors, I suppose or, like, specialists in that area. or pamphlets. Oh, like from an AID centre or a clinic of something like that. Kevin (11/NA)

> Well, people can encourage you to, to have safe sex, like, everybody, like society, your parents,

> your friends. Yeah, there's, they can do, they can help prevent these risky situations. Just by letting, like, what they're doing now, like. they're educating more, I think. AIDS is becoming a lot more, everybody knows about it. [int: so you think that's good?] Uh huh, yeah, definitely, yeah. Sherri (11/IC)

Sherri felt that friends could be helpful in avoiding risky situations. She used as an example, her trip to Vancouver in which she found herself in the middle of a prostitution set up. Unfortunately, she did not take the advice of her friend. Here, again, is an example of a biography that, when shared with other adolescents, may help avoid the same experience for another young girl.

> ... if [your friends] think you're getting into a risky situation, then they can help you, help to prevent it by talking to you and helping you realize that it's risky. Yeah, well, when I went away to Vancouver my friend tried to stop me, but I never listened. Oh yeah, yeah, actually she left that night and said that she wasn't going to talk to me again, if I went. But, I didn't really believe her. Sherri (11/IC)

In summary, the grade nine and grade eleven participants had clear opinions about what sexual behaviours were okay for them and what sexual behaviours were wrong, the types of relationships that should be in place for certain sexual behaviours, and what sexual behaviours were risky.

Behaviours that adolescents felt they should get involved in or were wrong for them varied according to their sexual experience more than their grade. Table 11 shows responses according to experience but also shows the grade of each respondent. Grades were very mixed throughout all groupings of sexual experience.

In contrast, there was very little variation by grade or sexual experience when adolescents were asked about the types of relationship that should exist if they want to be sexually active (a term whose definition varies for each participant). All participants said hugging and kissing were okay on a first date. For sexual behaviours beyond that, they had to be in a stable, long term, comfortable relationship. Once in a long term relationship, almost all participants felt that sexual intercourse was okay. Long term varied from 5-6 months to 3 years depending on the participant.

Table 11: Sexual Limit Setting by Experience

	Not Active Intercourse	Sexually Active
Should get Involved In	•whatever I feel comfortable •whatever I feel comfortable with, not intercourse for me (11) with (11) •Nothing until I'm •whatever you choose (11) married (11) •hugging and kissing as •I don't think you should be you know the person (9) involved really sexually (9) •None of the sexual behaviours (9)	•Anything you're comfortable with other than intercourse (11) •whatever you want to do, up to the individual (9)
Sexual Behaviours That Are Wrong	•sexual intercourse (11) •handcuffs, and abnormal •intercourse, heavy petting (11) sex (11) •intercourse is too close, too •anything that is being personal (11) forced (11) •anything beyond kissing (9) •anal sex (11) •sex before marriage (9) •If you know them very well •intercourse, kissing (9) and feel very strongly, not very much is wrong (9)	•intercourse (9) •using a person if you don't like them (9) •not right to go all the way intercourse is not worth it (11)

What Kind of Relationship to Be Involved Sexually	•long term, really care about •long term (more than 5-6 mos), the person (11) serious boyfriend (11) •married (11) •solid relationship, honest •until you are comfortable, about feelings (11) communicate (9) •long term (9)	•friendship (not considering intercourse). (11) •really like the person, feel close to them (not considering intercourse) (9)
Sexual Behaviours Appropriate for First Date	•Kissing and hugging (9) •hold hands, kiss (11) •no sex on first date (9) not intercourse definitely, •kissing after a few weeks, it ruins everything (11) not right away (9) •maybe a small kiss at the end of the date (11)	•hold hands, little kiss (9)
Sexual Behaviours Appropriate For Long Term Relationship	•not petting or intercourse, •intercourse after you know the cause I've seen a lot of people person really well (9) break up over it (9) •same as first date, no intercourse (9)	•intercourse, whatever (9) (long term a few years) •intercourse okay, cause after two years, you should care for them (9)

Risky Sexual Behaviours	•Oral Sex (9,11) •intercourse with no condom (9,11) •Involved with someone I don't know (9,11)	SAME FOR ALL
SEXUAL EXPERIENCES	•petting if it leads to intercourse (9) •sleeping around leads to disease (9,11)	

*These are the sexual behaviours that they have identified as appropriate for them. It varies from one participant to another. This does not mean that these types of relationships necessarily lead to sexual intercourse.

When asked about risky sexual behaviours, participants most often said that unprotected sex and sex with someone they did not know well were risky behaviours.[3] The grade nines were more likely to report that others could help them avoid risky behaviours and the grade elevens were more inclined to take responsibility for their actions. Both grades still looked to their parents and schools for education and guidance, and counted on their partners to share the responsibility of safer sex. Grade elevens recognized the potential for guidance from society, medical professionals, and the media.

Contrasting Sexual Intentions

Encouraging Sexual Behaviours

In order to examine what factors may encourage sexual behaviours, participants were asked general questions about how they showed their affection and initiated sexual behaviours. They were also asked what situations they had found themselves or might find themselves in that would encourage them to be sexually active.

Both the grade nines and elevens were asked how they showed their feelings. They all responded that they might flirt, maybe ask the person out, or simply tell them how they feel. Physical gestures included holding hands, kissing, and hugging. The grade elevens added that showing affection also included sharing feelings and having fun together.

> Well, like, affection and stuff, kissing at first and just opening up and talking about your feelings. If you like the person a lot and you guys get along really well, then you know it. Which helps you open up more, if you open up, the other person know that you, you, feel comfortable with them. Just by having respect, the little

---

[3] The risk was judged by the potential consequences of STDs, AIDS, and pregnancy

> things in life count the most, I think. By just remembering them when it comes to certain situations first. Yeah, casue if, when I know that he cares, then it helps to open up to him and I can express my feelings towards him easier. Sherri (11/IC)

Participants were also asked "If you wanted to be sexually active, how would you make the first move or initiate the behaviour?" The grade nines were quite unsure of how they would initiate sexual behaviours. Some felt that it was up to the male, some did not know how it would begin, and another felt that 'if it happened, it happened'. By grade eleven, the participants were more relaxed, prepared to deal with the prospect of initiating sexual behaviours. There was discussion about mutual consent of both individuals and more open communication. Some of the participants still indicated their reluctance to plan intentional sexual behaviours, preferring that the experience be spontaneous.

> Well, I'm assuming that it would be with somebody that I've, I've been with. For awhile and usually, I talk about it. Like, just be honest, say, you know, I think, we've been together and you can start a new portion of our relationship and then. [int: you'd talk about it] Uh huh, and then, I'm sure, like from kissing and petting and things just continue. After you've talked and everybody understands, everybody. [int: so you have an understanding between the two of you] Yeah. And then you just go as far. [int: as you understand] yeah.... And then it can just happen. Susan (11/IC)

> I think I would, I would have to know the person. Obviously, very well, So I would think that I would know what, that the first move would be. According to what that, who that person is and what they like and because I would have to know them very well,... Brad (11/NA)

> I don't think it would be me, personally, I think it would be both of us making that decision. I think it would have to be mutual, like both people

> would have to want it before anything would happen. Kevin (11/NA)
>
> I would talk to my boyfriend about it, definitely. And ask him what he thinks, like, if he feels comfortable with it and if you do, then, that's how I'd go about it. I'd just let nature take it's course, don't, like, rush into anything or plan it. Just do it, what you feel comfortable with. If you want to make love, then I'm sure it'll lead to that. Well, just let things happen as they come. Sherri (11/IC)
>
> ...just sort of , kind of, in the mood, kind of. [int: it's part of what happens when you're together, it's just sort of natural, is that what you're saying?] Yeah. Just sort of happens, it's not like you do it on purpose. [int: or plan it] Right. Karen (11/SA)

Participants were also asked " Who would it be with, do you have certain expectations about who it will be with?". For both grade nines and elevens, they said it would be someone that they knew very well, in a long term relationship.

> Probably someone with a, that's not like, goes around and does stuff with everyone... And who's understanding and nice and communicates. David (9/SA)
>
> Uhm, somebody I really liked and they really liked me and we would have to be, like, able to communicate very easily like, and not hold anything back and just, like, a really good relationship. [Interviewer: So you wouldn't go ahead with sexual behaviours unless there's a commitment with the relationship?] yeah, definitely.[Interviewer: So it would be a long term thing] yeah. John (9/SA)
>
> Probably someone that you've known for a while, like not really known that you've been, like really close to, so you feel comfortable with them and you know, like, you know lots about them or...[Interviewer: what kind of relationship could you have with that person if you want to be sexually involved?] Well, probably love. You'd have to, I'd say long term too, like if you've

> just known this person for a week then I wouldn't say that you would be very, like, sexually involved with them cause you don't know them very well and you don't, you're not really sure what your feelings are for them. Cheryl (9/IC)
>
> I, it would have to be long term. You'd have to, I don't think you'd have to love each other. But I think you'd have to really care about the other person. Because I don't think at sixteen you can really love someone. Like you can at thirty. Brad (11/NA)
>
> Probably, hopefully, long term. Just so you can work on more than just the physical part, but, like the friendship too. Karen (11/SA)

In order to better understand the situations that may encourage sexual behaviours, participants were asked if there were certain places that they would go if they wanted to be sexually active, certain clothes that they would wear, or certain times that were more conducive to sexual activity.

Whether participants were in grade nine or eleven, responses were the same. They did not plan on being sexually active, but expected their sexual behaviours to be spontaneous. They had not given a lot of thought to particular situations in which they would initiate sexual behaviours.

Participants felt that they would most likely be at a house where nobody was home when they initated sexual behaviours. It may be their house, their partners' house, or a friend's house. An alternative place would be a car. It would most likely happen during the night, usually on weekends. It was noted in the grade eleven focus group discussion that "young people don't have a lot of places to go and if they are in a car or something, you know, they are not going to do it in broad daylight". Participants agreed that they would not wear anything special or different. They would also refrain from any use of alcohol if they wanted to be sexually active. When they make the decision to become sexually involved, they want to have their 'wits about them'.

> Uhm, no, cause if I ever wanted to have sex then I'd want to do it , like, of my own will, not anything else making me do it....not influenced by anything, just because I wanted to do it. John (9/SA)

> No. Not usually. Unless you're at a party. [Interviewer: so people you age can still be sexually involved in and not involved in alcohol and drugs?] Yeah. [another agrees] Focus Group 9

> No, I wouldn't, not at all, because it's, you distort perception so the other person may not want to be involved or I may not want to be involved, but when you use alcohol and drugs, what you do, sometimes you don't know what you do. That's what, what my parents mean by when they say be responsible. Brad (11/NA)

Sharing Sexual Histories

Even though the participants said that knowing your partner well and communication were important in avoiding risky sexual behaviours, very few of the participants, regardless of grade, would talk about their past or ask their partner about his/her past. There were two qualifications to this statement. Some participants said that they would talk about their past sexual experiences if their partner asked, or if they thought that their partner might have a disease. Their greatest concern throughout the discussion on sharing sexual histories was their partners' feelings. In very few instances were they considering safer sex. More often than not, they were interpreting the sharing of sexual histories as being 'snoopy' or rude.

> No. Maybe, I don't know. [Interviewer: Is it important to know about sexual history of your partner if you want to be involved?] Not really. Shannon (9/NA)

> Not to the point where there's people involved, just if there was anything that he liked or that he didn't or if he has been in contact with any diseases or anything like that. Susan (11/IC)
>
> Not unless I thought there was danger ... if she had a disease or something, then I would ask her, but I wouldn't ask her otherwise. [int: you would try to make that decision?] Yeah, I would make the decision whether I thought, like, if I know who the person is and I've known her all my life. Then I wouldn't ask because I know her. Brad (11/NA)
>
> ...not comfortable talking about it either, so I probably wouldn't. Cause I think that just, I don't know, it's weird, I wouldn't want to know a lot about his past. Cause, yeah, every relationship's different. [int: and you're comfortable with that, just not knowing?] Uh huh. Sherri (11/IC)
>
> Probably not. I don't know if I'd want to know. And if he wanted to tell me, he could. [int: so it would be up to him?] Uh huh. Karen (11/SA)
>
> No, you can't do that, cause that causes pain, misunderstanding, you know. Because somebody could think that you're thinking about an ex-boyfriend or something, when you're with them that's. [int: you wouldn't discuss because you wouldn't want] Any hurt feelings. Susan (11/IC)
>
> I don't think I would unless I had a disease or something, or if she asked. If she asked, I would. But I don't think I would just tell her, without her asking. Brad (11/NA)
>
> No. Just brings our bad feelings, anger, jealousy. They feel that you're comparing them or. Focus Group 11

For those that did consider talking about their past sexual experiences, the responses were as follows:

> Yeah, because they have a right to know. like, if I wasn't a virgin or whatever, it's their right to know. [Interviewer: Would you ask your partner the same question?] Oh definitely, it's my

> right to know too. [Interviewer: you would probe the sexual history?] Yeah John (9/SA)

> Well, I haven't been, but I probably would, sure. Probably, because if you don't, it would just sort of be a burden that you would have to carry. Karen (11/SA)

David changed his mind through the course of the discussion. His initial reaction was to consider safer sex as the motive for discussing past sexual experiences. As David considered the potential discussion, it was more difficult than he originally anticipated. This may be the reality of the experience. It may be that, although the intent is to communicate with the partner, it is easier said than done.

> Uh huh. Yeah, I'd make sure about that stuff, yeah. [Would you talk to her about your previous sexual history?] Uh huh. [Interviewer: would it be a problem?] Well it would kind of Well, I'm not sure . [interviewer: if you were not sexually active before that would you tell her?] yeah [Interviewer: and if you were sexually involved before her, would you also tell her?] Actually no. I guess not. I'd be scared something would happen. Uh, well, if I didn't tell her, then she'd probably wouldn't tell me so, I guess not.. Changed my mind. David (9/NA)

Both grade nines and elevens were much more likely to talk about what sexual behaviours they would like to do. This did not seem to indicate curiosity of past relationships nor displeasure with their current partner. They would not talk about what sexual behaviours they prefer until they have been together at least a few times.

Figure 4 provides a summary of ways in which grade nines and elevens would show their feelings, and initiate sexual behaviours. Both grade nines and elevens were similar in the physical gestures they would use to show a person their feelings. Grade elevens, but not grade nines, added the emotional dimension and increased communication. Showing their feelings included showing affection, sharing personal problems with their partner, and having fun together. The uneven angle of the lines in Figure 4 represents the change from grade nine to eleven regarding their intent to communicate when initiating sexual behaviours. The center line is reserved for the spontaneous, unplanned nature of sexual behaviours.

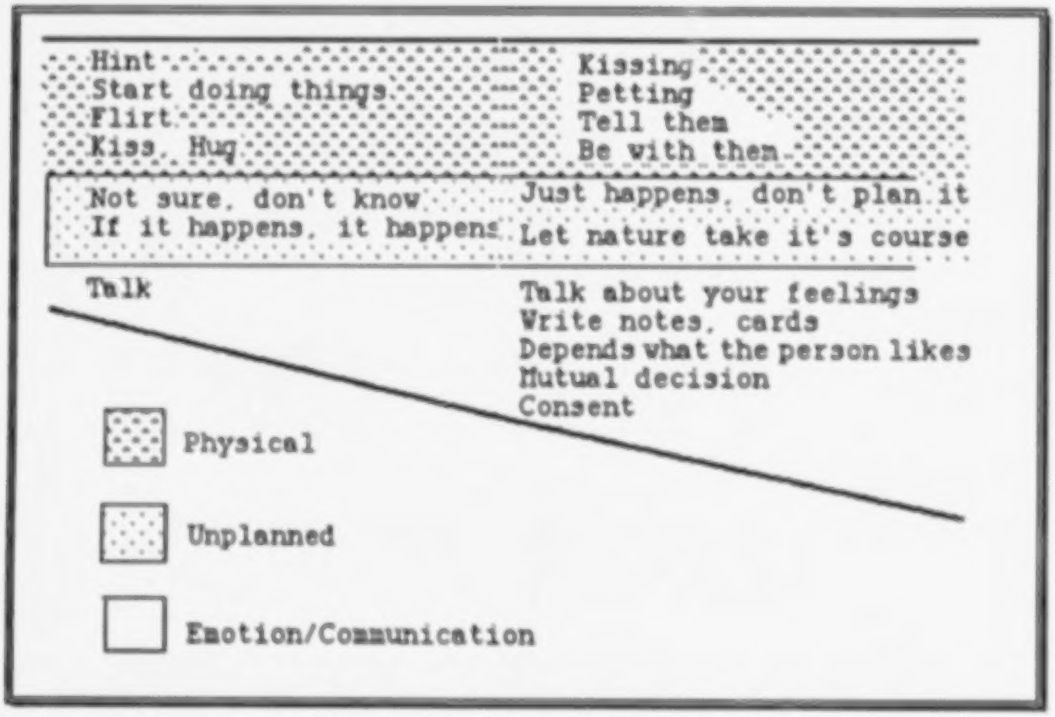
Hint
Start doing things
Flirt
Kiss, Hug
Kissing
Petting
Tell them
Be with them
Not sure, don't know
If it happens, it happens
Just happens, don't plan it
Let nature take it's course
Talk
Talk about your feelings
Write notes, cards
Depends what the person likes
Mutual decision
Consent
Physical
Unplanned
Emotion/Communication

Figure 4: Encouraging Sexual Behaviours by Grade

Grade elevens were more prepared to discuss how sexual behaviours would be initiated. Grade nines were quick to say 'I don't know'. They had not thought a lot about specifics of how, where, or when they would encourage sexual activity and were much more likely to feel uncomfortable with the idea that they would plan to be sexually active (for this reason, responses on the particulars of initiating sexual behaviours are not included in Figure 4.). They preferred that it 'just happen'. Participants were very sure that they would avoid using drugs or alcohol when they intended to be sexually active.

Although they know that having intercourse with someone they don't know is risky, many of them responded negatively when asked if they would discuss their sexual histories. They would, however, talk about what sexual behaviours they would like to do.

Discouraging Sexual Behaviours

Participants said that they would tell their partners if they did not want to be sexually involved. They would not dress any particular way, but would avoid using alcohol or drugs in order to be clear about their thoughts and actions. They were all discouraged by crowds, 'gross' places, parents, and other teens being present. The only difference between the two grades related to their social activities. Grade nines specifically said to avoid being alone and going to certain places. In contrast, grade elevens felt that they could do all the same things, but would behave differently, making it clear to their partner that they did not intend to be sexually active (Table 12).

Susan, who has been sexually active, provided a story of when she was discouraged by an experience, and Karen told how the experience of peers was discouraging. These were not changes to their intentions at the time that they were faced with making decisions about sexual behaviours. Instead, these were situations outside of sexual contexts that they found discouraging.

> I went to the doctor and found out something that really bothered me. I had warts. ... I don't take to sleeping around and cheating, so I knew that he [boyfriend at the time] had something. ...it took a while to get them removed. Cause they had, like, it's painful. And through that whole time,

> he always wanted to do something and I was just, like, no, stay away from me. I just turned my back and went to sleep. Susan (11/IC)
>
> Just seeing kids my age and stuff having kids. Like, some people in my school are already married and she's just got out of high school ... it seems to start ruining the relationship after a while. I feel sorry for them, sort of wish that they had thought about it before. Karen (11/SA)

In summary, all the participants had identical ideas about how they would discourage sexual behaviours and what situations were discouraging. Participants said that they would tell their partner that they did not want to be sexually active, would not wear anything special (but would avoid provocative clothing), would avoid being alone, and would definitely avoid the use of alcohol and drugs.

They were much more prepared to discuss discouraging sexual behaviour than initiating or encouraging sexual behaviour. Again, they gave the impression that their sexual experiences were of a spontaneous nature, seldom, if ever, planned.

Table 12: Discouraging Sexual Behaviours

	Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
How to Discourage Sexual Behaviours	·Use excuse if you can't communicate, just state if you can (NA) ·Avoid alcohol, drugs (SA) ·Tell them (SA) ·No alcohol, drugs (NA, Focus Group) ·Don't get too close to the person (NA) ·Hint, but not straight forward (NA)	·Just tell them (IC) ·No drugs or alcohol (NA) ·Let them know to begin with (IC)
Discouraged	·Where there are lots of people (IC,NA) ·When parents are around (Focus Group) ·Public place	·Wherever, just don't do it anything that leads to sexual activity (NA) ·Doesn't matter where you are as long as partner knows (NA) ·skating, movies, walks (IC) ·where you are not alone (SA)
Special Clothes	·No (all)	
Discouraged By	·Other people around (IC) ·AIDS (SA) ·Seeing peers having children (SA) ·Parents finding out (SA) ·STDs (IC) ·What others might think about you (Focus)	
Feelings	·Feel sorry for peers with children ·Mad ·Might think twice about it before they get involved again	
Why Would You Not Get Involved	·church ·parents ·peers ·not comfortable	

Situations That May Change Intentions

Sexual Activity When Abstinence is Planned

When asked what situations might encourage them, even though they had not been sexually active, grade nines responded that they may become sexually involved due to peer pressure or pressure from their partner. For example, in the focus group discussion, participants felt that "Like if other people are doing it, you think, well maybe, it's okay, I should maybe it's okay". The same kind of pressure may be experienced if they are with the 'wrong crowd', or if they were alone with their partner in a very special place. Grade elevens were not as likely to feel that peer pressure would encourage them to become sexually active.

Grade elevens tended to focus more on situations that they may find themselves in than peer pressure. They often cited alcohol as a potential factor in their sexual behaviours.

> I think this would probably happen at a party where there is alcohol or drugs, because if I was thinking and my brain was working like it should, then I wouldn't. I just wouldn't, and but if I was using alcohol or drugs, then I don't know what I would do. And that's why I don't use them, cause I don't want to, I will kind of fear the unknown. Brad (11/NA)

> ... if I was with that other person and that's it, like just the two of us. And we were somewhere like, alone, Kevin (11/NA)

When they were asked why they would get involved, grade nines and elevens differed. This difference existed only in relation to the emphasis placed on peer pressure. Grade nines felt that peer pressure, being at parties and the importance of 'not being made fun of' were potential reasons for changing their intentions. Grade elevens more often said that their own desire to become involved would change their intentions. Both grades identified alcohol consumption as a potential factor.

> ...pressure like from the, like, just the things that we thought we had to do and, and because we wanted to, like of our own will, so, like, you know, experiment and stuff. John (9/SA)

> ...I'd be able to control whether or not I did something, like If I didn't want to have sexual intercourse with somebody and the situation wasn't going my way, then I'd just have to leave. Cheryl (9/IC)

> ...peer pressure. Like if other people are doing it, you think, well maybe, it's okay, I should. Focus Group 9

> Drinking (2X) At a party. When you're just the two people, that you're must not really a crowd of people, like, it's just more intimate moment. Focus Group 11

> Curiosity, just being curious ... Maybe you want to be part of the peer group. Peer Pressure. Trying to fit into society or what you believe society is. Or just another person coming along and treating you different, like treating you the way you really like to be treated. Just change your mind cause you want to, you know, share the experience with that person. Focus Group 11

> I would get involved because I wouldn't know what I was doing. It would be the only way. Brad (11/NA)

> Because they pressured me, adequately enough. Like, reasoned with me I guess, so to speak. [int: would they have to work pretty hard at that?] Yeah, I think so. Kevin (11/NA)

> Probably jsut because of the circumstances and the friendship and everything, just the closeness. Karen (11/SA)

Participants were then asked to consider how they might feel if they became sexually active, having not been previously. Participants indicated that their feelings would be negative if they had gone against their intentions.

> My feelings, probably guilt. And I'd probably be mad at myself. Shannon (9/NA)

> They may be confused or. Scared. Maybe. Feel guilty. Focus Group

> Afterwards, I would be very angry at myself, because I did something that I know I shouldn't have done. And I would feel guilty. Brad (11/NA)

> Probably be scared, little bit nervous about it. But at the same time sort of, excited as well, like, just sort of, it's finally happening, kind of, and I, I don't feel like I'm being pressured to do it. Karen (11/SA)

> ...they feel really, it's like they've betrayed themselves almost, like if they didn't want to change their, their belief or their whatever and they they did, you know what I mean? Focus Group 11

> ...they would feel guilty to themselves. And often mad at the other person and that may not help anything, if they feel that they were almost a little bit forced into it. Afterwards they might feel mad or angry at the other person. Focus Group 11

Participants that had previously been sexually active were asked the same questions. Their personal histories provide examples of situations when they were encouraged to be sexually active, the confusion associated with that decision, and the feelings following their sexual experience.

> I was out drinking with a couple friends and we came back to, well, here,... my friend's boyfriend, was, he was talking to me cause they were having a lot of problems. And he started saying to me, I should have gone with you. You're so much better looking, you're so much nicer and all this, and all this. And I was drinking my, my brain, you know, like when things happen and I, I don't know what happened exactly or how it happened. But normally I would never even consider, even think, a second about doing anything with a friend's boyfriend. ... But for

> some reason, just the way he was talking, it made me feel that it would be alright. Susan (11/IC)

> ...I was fourteen, I was in grade nine. I met this guy, was at our Christmas dance, and I had known him for about a week and then he asked me to go to Vancouver with him. And I said no at first, I'm like, there's no possible way I can go with you, I don't even know you and we just got to know each other and Christmas holidays came. They were really boring so, here I go, I'm on my way to Vancouver, stupid. And my parents thought I was at my friend's house for the weekend. Well, it was one of the worst experiences in my life. ... he said that we had everything, we had a place to stay and everything. Well, we ended up staying in motels and the people we were with, he was with his cousin, she was a hooker. And that was the whole reason that he wanted me to go down there. [int: he wanted you to go there to hook?] Yeah, he wanted to put me on the streets. He tried to force me, but I wouldn't, like there was no way, I just, I felt totally horrible and I couldn't believe that, that was happening to me. And he did force sex on me ... I didn't want anything to do with him. I was, I hated him. He was ... twenty-two. ...he initially asked me if I would go out and work the streets. He said that we didn't have enough money to get back to Edmonton, or something, that he needed the money and I'm like. I was young, really stupid and I refused to and then he just pushed me around a bit and that's when it happened. ...I tried to scratch him and push him off and stuff and he was just too big. ...then I just went in the shower and sat in the shower for, like, an hour. ...he had to go to the airport or something in Victoria for his cousin and I just took off and went up to the desk and said " I'm fourteen years old and I have to get home." Sherri (11/IC)

Quite often, participants' description of the situation was explanation enough of why they got involved. In cases where they did not plan to be sexually active, often drinking was involved. In other situations, they were aware of what they were doing and were doing so because they wanted to. It is important to note that not all sexual involvement was sexual intercourse. Depending on the participants' definition of sexual behaviours, it may have been only kissing, hugging, and petting.

> Well, drinking didn't help anything and then he was talking to me like he was in love with me or something. At least that's the way I, I understood it. And I guess, it just everything, put together, I just went over the top and. Susan (11/IC)

> ...most of it [has] been like parties, just like sitting on the couch or watching TV or anything like we could just be over at her house with like, couple other people and. John (9/SA)

For those that were sexually involved because they had genuine feelings for their partner, the experience was positive. John (9/SA) and Sherri (11/IC) both felt that their experience had been good and that both partners had shared the same feelings.

> Like I really cared about her and stuff like that and I wasn't just doing it for, like, a good time or anything, like, I was still thinking about commitment and stuff. [Interviewer: Were there feelings of guilt?] Uhm, no. [Interviewer: or anything bad, good?] Good, yeah, nothing bad though. [Interviewer: and how did the partner feel?] Uh, she, she was, like she didn't show any signs of discomfort, like she didn't want to do it, or, or like she didn't show that, uh, any guilt, yeah. John (9/SA)

> I felt good about the relationship, I felt good about him. It was special, I felt really good about it. Both of us did, it made us a lot closer too. Sherri (11/IC)

In contrast, those that were sexually active devoid of emotions that John (9/SA) and Sherri (11/IC) talked of, or against their will, did not have positive experiences.

> ...I still feel absolutely terrible about it. It was a horrible night. [int; so it was not something that you had wanted to do?] No, it

> wasn't. . I still feel just, like dirt whenever I think about it. ...I actually vomitted, I was just sick with, because I don't know. I just immediately sobered up and I was just, What am I doing here and I just sat up, it was just like, Oh my god, I have to go home, I'm leaving, bye. Sorry. And I couldn't sleep for about three days. I was just shaking, I was just sick. Because I betrayed my, a friend of mine. [int; how are you dealing with that now?] I still feel terrible, every time I see him or her. And I think about it, ...I couldn't tell her, just too afraid she'd kill me or something, just. Susan (11/IC)

> I felt really, just really bad about myself, really cheap, betrayed, I just, I had so much hatred for him, so much emotion inside me. [int: and you weren't interested at all?] ...I wasn't interested at all, cause then I knew what he was about and I knew what he wanted of me. Sherri (11/IC)

Table 13 provides a summary of the responses from participants that have not been sexually active when asked what may happen to change their intentions. Participants responses did not vary with age or grade. The participants who have been sexually active provided support for these comments when they told about their personal experiences.

Table 13: Changing Intentions: Abstinence to Sexual Behaviours

	Grade Nine	Grade Eleven
Sexual Activity When Abstinence is Planned	·Peer pressure (NA) ·Pressure from partner (NA) ·If other people are doing it (NA) ·With the wrong crowd (NA) ·Alone with partner in nice place (IC)	·Intimate moment, no crowds (SA) ·Alcohol,drugs (SA) ·Somewhere alone with partner (NA) ·A day when you are feeling especially close (SA)
Where	·party (NA) ·car (NA) ·Nowhere in particular (NA)	No information
When	·mutual consent (SA) ·grade 12, university (NA) ·Doesn't matter (Focus)	No information
Feelings (NA)	·Guilt, mad at myself (NA) ·Confused, scared, guilty (focus)	·Scared, nervous, excited (SA) ·Betrayed themselves, guilty
Why Would You	·We wanted to (SA) ·Peer pressure (NA) ·So not to be made fun of(NA) ·Party, too much to drink (Focus)	·Peer pressure (NA) ·Wouldn't know what I was doing (because of alcohol) (NA) ·The closeness (SA) ·Curiosity (Focus) ·Drinking (Focus)

Abstinence When Sexual Activity is Planned

When asked what may make them change their intentions to be sexually active, their responses did not vary markedly dependent on grade or sexual experience. For the most part, this supports previous findings reported with regard to initiating sexual behaviours.

Participants had not given much thought to particulars such as where, when and how they would intitiate sexual behaviours. Therefore, when asked what would change those plans, they were unable to describe specific instances or examples of what may have discouraged their plans to be sexually active. There was no variation from what participants responded when asked "What would discourage you from becoming sexually active?".

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The conclusions will draw together the information that was gained from the pre-interview questions, individual interviews and focus group interviews. Part I shows that adolescents that participated in this study shared unique traits that make this population succeptible to contracting AIDS.

Part II of the conclusions reviews the feedback received from participants regarding HIV/AIDS education and sexuality education programs they have taken. Smith and Lathrop (1993) stated that it was futile to address disease prevention in the absence of including relationships, social, behavioural, and emotional needs. Comments made by some of the participants revealed that some sexuality education programs they have experienced have not adequately addressed the social and emotional needs. Participants felt that education programs that they had taken part in did not address the relationship, social and emotional needs that should be a part of sexual experiences.

The third, and final, part of the conclusions shows that adolescents' values, attitudes, perceived expectations, and social contexts in which sexual behaviours occur are all factors that effected their decisions about sexual behaviours. For that reason, all these factors should be included for the successful intervention of risky adolescent sexual behaviours.

Part I: Emergence of Adolescent Personality Traits

As the data were analyzed, it became apparent that, based on adolescent development literature (Chilman, 1980; Gruber & Chambers, 1987; Mehr, 1981; Mitchell, 1993), participants were typical of what one would expect from the adolescent population. The participants revealed, through their comments and discussion, that they were going through the developmental tasks identified by previous research (Alter, 1982; Jessor, 1984; Lewis & Lewis, 1984). While they struggled to define themselves and the 'person they want to be', they were experimenting, taking risks, and not fully cognizant of the consequences of their actions.

In searching for their identity, adolescents attempt to define themselves and their gender role, and establish their self image (Alter, 1982). Comments made by a number of participants reflected their attempts to establish their identity. For example, one of the grade nine males mentioned the fact that expectations the school may have regarding his sexual behaviours was, in part, associated with the fact that he was a 'nice guy' and the teachers just 'wouldn't expect any different from that'. Already, this participant has formed a self image based on his perception of the teachers' opinions of him. Gender identification was obvious when participants were asked how they would initiate sexual behaviours. Many of the participants said that active initiation of sexual behaviours was the male's responsibility. The second developmental tasks is the search for intimacy.

Adolescents need to feel that they have the capacity both to love and be loved (Alter, 1982). Darling and Hicks (1982), also recognized the onset of puberty as a time when female adolescents mature socially, and that sexuality is a factor of both maturity and proximity to marriage. Both male and female participants in this study said that they expect their search for a partner or a serious relationship to influence their values, attitudes and sexual limit setting over the next few years. They believed that, as they get older, they will be wanting a relationship and looking for someone. This reflects adolescents' need to assure themselves that they have the capacity to love and be loved.

Finally, their search for integrity provides a foundation for sorting out their values, what they believe, and how they should behave. In this research, grade nines believed that, through both sexual and emotional experiences they will have over the next few years, their values will refine. In actual fact, this research showed that grade nines did not have a clear understanding of what values were and that values have the potential to influence their decisions. It seems that over the next few years, grade nines will, in fact, make decisions about their values based on future sexual and non-sexual experiences.

In contrast, grade elevens indicated that they have, to a large extent, already defined their values and what they believe. This difference between grade nines and elevens identified a 'marker' with regard to the time at which they search for integrity. The younger adolescents' responses (grade nines) indicated that this is a developmental task that they have yet to accomplish whereas the older adolescents' (grade eleven) responses indicated that they have already, at least partially, completed their search for integrity.

In order to accomplish these developmental tasks, adolescents are prone to experimental behaviour (Chilman, 1980; Humm & Kunreuther, 1991; Lewis & Lewis, 1984; Mehr, 1981). This finding was supported by the present research findings, as participants often cited experience during their teen years, or experimenting, as a source of information on sexual behaviours, as a source of their values, and as a source of their attitudes. Grade eleven participants reminisced about times, since grade nine, when they or their peers were experimenting. In contrast, grade nines, as noted above, indicated by their responses that they were only entering into the time when they assumed they would begin to work through developmental tasks. They believed that they would experience a lot over the next few years, mature, and become more independent. The pattern and timing of participants' development coincides with adolescent development as described by Mehr (1981).

This tendency to experiment with sexual behaviours has been witnessed in previous research (Grossman, 1991; Moran & Corely, 1991). In this research, participants often said that experimental behaviours were the result of their curiosity. Curiosity was the result of information (most likely partial and incorrect information) or stories shared by their siblings and peers. Perhaps by dispelling myths and encouraging open communication about sexuality and sexual behaviours, adolescents' curiosity can be satisfied without experimenting with their sexuality, or at least without experimenting with sexual intercourse. The most effective avenues for dispelling these myths will be those referents that have the most influence. Based on these research findings, parents, school, and media may have the most effect in encouraging open communication. Peers will continue to be an influencial referent for the adolescent. For that reason, the adolescent population must be educated and provided direction as they influence each other. One aspect of that education will include discussion about their vulnerability which will be contrary to their perception.

Responses also showed that participants' perception of the risk associated with experimental sexual behaviours was tinted by their belief that adolescents are somewhat invulnerable and immune to what others may be succeptible to. For example, Susan, although she noted the importance of protecting herself, went on to say that she would probably not get 'it' (pregnant, AIDS, STDs) because she was only a teenager. The tendency to feel invulnerable was supportive of other research findings and publications (Chilman, 1980; Grossman, 1991; Mehr, 1981; Mitchell, 1993)

Part II: Sexuality Education Experiences in the Past

A review of sexuality education curriculum by Brook-Gunn, Boyer, and Hein (1988) showed that none of the sexuality education programs from elementary through senior high school included discussions on emotions and feelings, values, or attitudes. Although it is presumptuous to believe that this is true of all programs, the danger of reducing sexuality education to biology and progression of disease is often noted in the literature (Flora & Thoresen, 1988; King & Wright, 1993; Smith & Lathrop, 1983).

Alberta research on HIV/AIDS education (Munro & Doherty-Poirier, 1991) showed that almost all grade nine and eleven teachers included instruction about the use of condoms, abstinence, sharing needles and receiving blood in the HIV/AIDS classes. Topics included by fewer teachers included implications of HIV/AIDS and negotiation skills. Questions were not asked in reference to attitudes, values, or emotional relationships. The researcher is cautious about accepting these results as reflective of all sexuality and HIV/AIDS education for two reasons. First, this research pertained only to HIV/AIDS education and only in one school system. In these and other schools, relationships may be discussed in other courses (for example, religion). Second, without asking teachers directly whether or not they deal with the issues of emotions and feelings, they may have overlooked the fact that, throughout the course content, both were discussed. Regardless, it is important to acknowledge adolescents' perceptions and make adjustments to sexuality education curriculum in order to meet their needs.

Participants agreed that their sexuality education experiences in the past had been very effective in some respects, but very ineffective in others. The participants were very adept at identifying the greatest downfall of sexuality education to date. Although courses provide all the biology and skills-oriented instruction they need regarding sexuality and safe sex, participants felt that the emotions and feelings that should be a part of any physical relationship were not addressed. One of the potential considerations when planning future HIV/AIDS education is to address the void created by ignoring aspects of sexuality beyond biology, HIV/AIDS knowledge, and HIV/AIDS preventive behaviour skills.

Jessor (1982) suggested three alternative strategies that may be worth considering when planning HIV/AIDS prevention programs. The first strategy is minimization. These strategies are aimed at developing strategies that limit or confine adolescents' participation in health-endangering behaviours. In the case of HIV/AIDS education, this might involve teaching students to limit and control behaviours that put them at risk for getting involved in risky sexual behaviours. As was shown by the participants responses, there are certain times, places and peers that may be more conducive to sexual activity. By providing adolescents with the foresight they need, they have the information they need to exercise self control. They have the information they need to decide whether certain times and places, or peers will put them in a position where they are faced with the decision whether or not to become sexually active. Adolescents can minimize situational factors that influence them to be sexually active by avoiding situations they know will likely lead to sexual behaviours.

Participants indicated that sexuality education should talk about sexual behaviours in relation to feelings or emotions that are part of sexual activity. The focus group discussion with grade elevens revealed that they believed many of their peers were having sexual relationships without emotional commitment and did not understand that there was a difference between sexual intercourse devoid of genuine feelings and sexual intercourse with genuine love and affection. Yet another comment indicated that adolescents should be prepared for the experience of wanting to be sexually active due to the emotions that evolve out of a relationship.

One of the participants implied that she had no idea what kind of feelings she would have when she experienced sexual behaviours that had been discussed in classes. Her comments seemed to indicate that it would have been useful for her to know what she would be dealing with prior to experiencing the desire to become sexually active. Others seemed to feel that they may have decided not to go so far as to have sexual intercourse had they known when they were twelve and fourteen what they know now.

The second alternative strategy suggested by Jessor (1982) was insulation. Insulation refers to 'cutting off' exploration and experimentation and reducing habitual actions that can endanger their health. Jessor (1982) used as an example curtailing alcohol consumption. Participants in this research, when asked about alcohol and drugs, said that avoiding alcohol and drugs was one way that they could be more sure of avoiding or discouraging sexual activity. This indicated, based on Jessor's (1982) terminology, that participants felt that they would be able to insulate themselves from sexual behaviours by reducing alcohol consumption. In fact, one participant said that he intentionally limits his alcohol consumption to one or two beers because he knows that he is able to maintain control of his sexual behaviours within that alcohol limit.

The third alternative strategy to prevent sexual intercourse in the adolescent population is 'delay of onset'.

Delay of onset, as defined by Jessor (1982), aims at postponing the start of sexual behaviours. This would include teaching adolescents various ways to understand their sexual feelings and urges as well as providing them information about personal and social pleasure of sexual experiences that stop short of intercourse. This concept includes exactly the behaviour that was examined when participants were asked about various sexual behaviours in order to understand sexual limit setting.

When participants were asked about sexual behaviours that were wrong for them, okay for them, and risky; those participants that had not had sexual intercourse had set sexual limits that stopped short of intercourse. For many participants, anything beyond hugging and kissing were beyond their sexual limits. For very few, petting, but not sexual intercourse was acceptable. All the respondents, regardless of their sexual experiences can benefit from understanding that their relationships can be satisfying and pleasurable without sexual intercourse, that until they are ready for more intimate sexual experiences, they can be comfortable and enjoy intimate experiences within their sexual limits.

Part III: Factors of Adolescent Sexuality

Values, attitudes, expectations, environment, and interpersonal skills were all factors that were related in some way to decisions regarding sexual behaviours. As the data were analyzed and trends emerged, support was found for a number of theories and relationships described in the Behavioural Change Intervention (BCI) Model (King & Wright, 1993).

The Behavioural Change Intervention Model

The Behavioural Change Intervention (BCI) model was conceived for the design, implementation and evaluation of an AIDS/STD sexuality program (Robertson et. al., 1991; Beazley, Warren, King& Wright, 1993). The model evolved out of the need to not only include all factors that contribute to risky behaviours, but also provide insight into how the behaviours may be modified.

Previous models of behaviour change have not given adequate attention to the nature of social interaction, the possibility of changes which may help to manipulate the social environment so that it is supportive of risk reduction behaviour, and the extent to which behaviour is legitimated by media and peer norms (King & Wright, 1993).

The BCI model (King et. al., 1993) focuses on the importance of social factors and recognizes the influence of physical settings. Similar to the beliefs of Herold et. al. (1990), King et. al. (1993) believed that intervention programs should make young people aware of possible situational factors that may affect sexual decision making. By doing so, adolescents are better prepared to develop coping strategies to deal with these situations, or avoid the situations.

The five components integrated into the BCI model take into account personal and contextual variables predicted to be associated with HIV/AIDS health risk behaviours. These five components are: (1) knowledge acquisition, (2) skills development, (3) social contexts (including attitudes and norms), (4) environmental contexts (including situations and places), and (5) behavioural orientation - behavioural intentions, and sexuality attitudes and self efficacy (see Figure 5). The focus, for the purpose of this research, will be on those factors that emerged out of this research data.

For each of the factors that emerged, summary conclusions and implications will be presented as follows. First, the 'parallel' factor in the King and Wright (1993) BCI model will be identified. Then, previous research that supported the importance of the factor for successful behaviour change will be cited. Finally, the findings from this research and the implications of those findings for the development of future HIV/AIDS education programs will conclude each section.

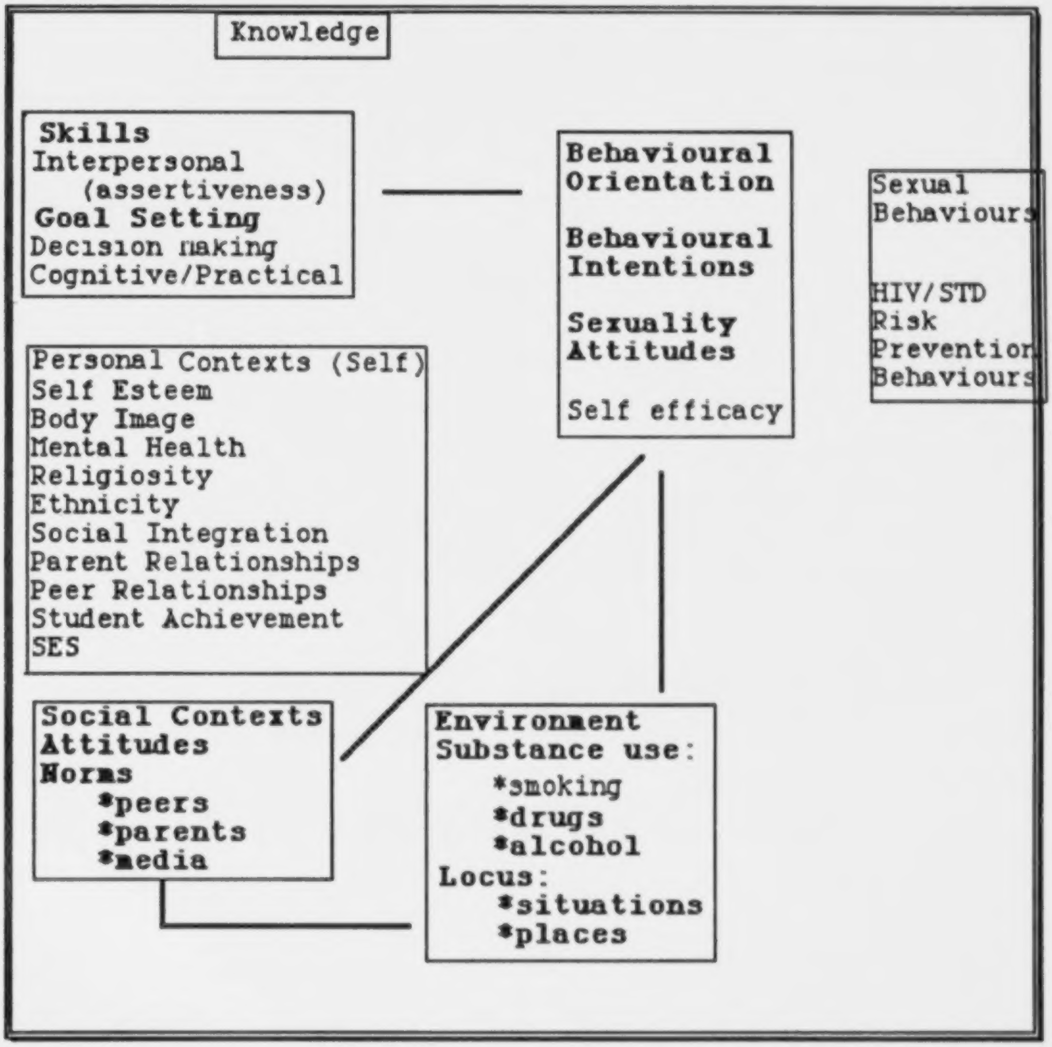
Knowledge
Skills
Interpersonal
(assertiveness)
Goal Setting
Decision making
Cognitive/Practical
Personal Contexts (Self)
Self Esteem
Body Image
Mental Health
Religiosity
Ethnicity
Social Integration
Parent Relationships
Peer Relationships
Student Achievement
SES
Social Contexts
Attitudes
Norms
*peers
*parents
*media
Behavioural Orientation
Behavioural Intentions
Sexuality Attitudes
Self efficacy
Environment
Substance use:
*smoking
*drugs
*alcohol
Locus:
*situations
*places
Sexual Behaviours
HIV/STD Risk Preventio Behaviours

Figure 5: Behavioural Change Intervention Model (King and Wright, 1993). Factors emerging out of this data are indicated in bold type. Relationships indicated by solid lines are examined.

Skills - Goal Setting

King and Wright (1993) included goal setting as one of the skills that would influence adolescents' behavioural intentions. The skills component, as they conceptualized it, was a four part program. The four parts were interpersonal skills, self management, cognitive skills, and practical skills. The interpersonal skills that run parallel to this research are communication skills. The self management skills directed at behaviour change that King and Wright included that run parallel to this research are decision making and goal setting, and maintaining decisions. Throughout this research, the goal setting identified by King and Wright (1993) has been discussed as the concept of sexual limit setting. These findings identified sexual limit setting as a crucial factor in adolescents' behavioural intentions. Those adolescents who had set goals for themselves and were able to maintain their decisions had identified sexual intercourse as extending beyond their goals (at this time) and were not having sexual intercourse.

Herold et. al. (1990) recognized the importance of sexual limit setting in order to avoid teenage pregnancy. Here, it has been identified as an important factor in avoiding transmission of HIV/AIDS. Participants who had not had sexual intercourse were consistently strong in stating that sexual intercourse was not for them, wrong for them, or something that they felt they were not ready for.

Participants who were sexually active to the extent of petting also felt that sexual intercourse went beyond the limit of what they were prepared for sexually. In contrast, those participants who had experienced sexual intercourse were more likely to identify that specific types of sexual intercourse went beyond their limits. In other words, they set their sexual limits at sexual intercourse that was uncomfortable, forced, or abnormal. Based on their definition of 'normal' sex, violent and anal intercourse went beyond their sexual limits.

When planning and implementing HIV/AIDS education programs, adolescents should be guided through the exercise of sexual limit setting. By providing both information and support, adolescents can be prepared for decisions they may be faced with in the future regarding sexual activities. Advance consideration of potential sexual behaviours will allow adolescents to think about potential consequences, both physical and emotional, and decide where they will set their sexual limits. An exercise in goal setting would also provide an opportunity to discuss personal values about sexual behaviours.

Personal Contexts - Values

Based on the King and Wright (1993) BCI model, values are a part of personal contexts that may influence behavioural intentions. Although King and Wright (1993) do not provide a definition of their concept of 'personal contexts', it appears to be comprised of those types of personal attributes and demographics that would enhance adolescents' belief that they control their decisions. Values identified by participants reflected the importance of self esteem, religiosity, or parent and peer relationships in their decisions regarding sexuality.

In particular, those participants that had not been sexually active were influenced by values they had been taught, often by parents or by a community that they belonged to (in one case the church). For example, Karen, who had chosen not to have sexual intercourse, said that her self esteem had been a factor in her decision not to have sexual intercourse. She felt that she had too much self respect to have sexual intercourse.

David, also having made the decision not to have sexual intercourse, valued what had been taught at his church.

Religiosity has had an influence on his decisions regarding sexual behaviours. Religiosity can act as a barrier to HIV/AIDS education (King & Wright, 1993). David commented on the fact that he had not been allowed to take sex education classes at school because his parents did not approve of his participation in these classes. Religiosity, in this case, has operated both as a deterrent for David with regard to sexual intercourse and as a barrier to his education regarding sexuality.

During interviews, it became apparent that a number of participants were very determined to follow expectations perceived from society, parents, and even peers to abstain from sexual behaviours. These same participants also discussed sexual intercourse and sexual behaviours without much concern about emotions, feelings, or urges that they may be faced with in the future. This researcher's concern is that, when these same participants are faced with the decision of whether or not to become sexually active, they may not be prepared for the reality of the situation. Adolescents must be prepared for the fact that they may have to decide whether or not to become sexually active at a time when they least expect it. If, for example, they maintain that they will not be sexually active beyond hugging and kissing until they are married, they will likely be confused and unprepared if they realize that they want to be sexually active when the circumstances are 'not perfect, as planned'. As King and Wright (1993) note.

> In many instances the societal and religious messages given to young people are not compatible with their values, beliefs and, more importantly, their behaviour. This is particularly true of pressure put on young people to be abstinent. The effect of such pressure is often to increase their guilt without giving them the resources they need

> to deal with the reality of their sexual activity and to develop prevention strategies (page 48).

This statement is also reflected in responses from some participants. Adolescents in the sample tended not to anticipate nor imagine encouraging sexual behaviours, instead, it would 'just happen'. When asked about how they would feel if they were to have sexual intercourse, they identified feelings of guilt, fear, and anxiety. These same types of behaviours and feelings were found in research regarding use of contraceptives (Morrison, 1985; Oskamp & Mindick, 1983). Although abstinence may be the best alternative for young adolescents both emotionally and physically, they must be allowed to make that decision without feeling guilty and with knowledge they need to be able to practice HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours.

Some values shared by members of society also present barriers to HIV/AIDS education and prevention (King & Wright, 1993). As was noted by Susan, Kevin, and Sherri, there were some things that society could do to help prevent risky behaviours. They mentioned providing education, easy access to birth control and condoms, and HIV/AIDS information. All this is only possible if society accepts and supports the need for these services for the adolescent population.

Sexually active participants valued such things as caring, honesty, genuine affection, and loyalty. It is difficult to know what their values were prior to experiencing sexual intercourse. None of them mentioned self esteem or religiosity as values that effected their decisions regarding sexual behaviours. It is difficult to identify the source of values, for example, whether they learn these values from their church or their family. It is not difficult to determine that, regardless of the source, values themselves are important to adolescents' decision making.

The implications of these findings when planning and implementing future HIVAIDS education would be, very simply, to discuss values. It was clear from participants' responses that grade nine participants were often confused by questions regarding values. For younger adolescents, the values they identified were, more often than not, consequences of behaviour. For example, getting pregnant, getting STDS, or AIDS. These findings support previous research that identified cognitive development as a factor to consider when planning sexuality and HIV/AIDS education (Fisher, 1986; King & Wright, 1993; Mehr, 1981; Wattleton, 1988).

For programs aimed at younger adolescents, it would mean introducing a new concept to them. The objective would be to identify exactly what values are. In addition, adolescents must realize that they are just beginning to decide what they value and that, within a few years, they will probably have very definite ideas about what behaviours (sexual and non-sexual) they want to take part in based on their values.

Some of the participants revealed their regrets regarding sexual behaviours they became involved in, without having thought about or known their values. Furthermore, once their values were established, they wished they had waited to make decisions on sexual behaviours until they were sure that the behaviour was right for them.

Older adolescents (grade elevens) would be prepared to have more open discussion about what values they hold and, possibly, what influenced their values. This type of open discussion may provide the peer support they need to adhere to values such as respect (for self and others) and sexual limit setting.

Social Contexts - Attitudes

The social contexts, in particular attitudes, were believed to be influencial factors in adolescent sexual behaviours (King & Wright, 1993). Previous research, although it did not provide specific examples of the relationship between attitudes and sexual behaviours, did note the importance of attitudes in behavioural intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Aijzen, 1975). If individuals have negative attitudes towards a behaviour, they will not be motivated to perform that behaviour. Without the motivation to perform the behaviour, they will likely not perform that behaviour.

Participants in this study who had decided not to have sexual intercourse tended to have negative attitudes towards sexual intercourse. Those participants that had experienced sexual intercourse did not state their attitudes towards sexual intercourse specifically. Based on these findings, adolescents that had negative attitudes about sexual behaviour had not experimented with sexual behaviours.

These findings were the same as previous findings regarding the sources of attitudes. Previous research has found that, while parents may not be the disseminators of sexual information, the interaction between parents and children contribute to the form and substance of the child's attitudes towards sexuality (Darling & Hicks, 1982; Sanders & Mullis, 1988; Walters & Walters, 1983; White & DeBlassie, 1992). These findings were repetitive of other research (Darling & Hicks, 1982; Moran & Corely, 1991; White & DeBlassie, 1992) which showed that, while peers were the main providers of sexual information, parents were identified most often as their source of attitudes.

Attitudes do in fact impact the sexual intentions of adolescents, and parents are the main source of sexual attitudes. The implication is that parents must be provided some direction regarding the role they play in their children's attitude formation.

Parents need to think carefully about their own attitudes about sexual behaviours and what attitudes they want to transmit to their children. They must be prepared to talk openly to children about sexuality, and acknowledge that they are the central influence on their children's sexual attitudes. In order for HIV/AIDS education to be effective, some education activities should encourage adolescents to communicate with their parents and, at the same time, encourage and guide parents who may be apprehensive or have difficulty discussing sexuality with their children.

Social Contexts - Norms

King and Wright (1993) included the norms that adolescents perceive as an important factor in their behavioural intentions. Past researchers have noted the importance of peer influence in adolescent behaviour, and the relative influence of various referent groups (Brown & Fritz, 1988; King & Wright, 1993). Walters and Walters (1983) made the distinction between peer and parent influence very clear. Similar to his findings, these findings indicated that peers were the most salient source of influence on matters of 'who am I?' and parents were the most salient influence on matters of 'who am I to be?' This distinction became increasingly obvious as adolescents' source of information on sexual behaviours as opposed to the source of values and attitudes. The findings seem to indicate that the sexual behaviours that adolescents are interested in currently are those behaviours that peers (and in some cases siblings) have discussed with them. These are the 'here and now', concrete events. In contrast, responses to questions on attitudes reflected the impact of parents on adolescents'ideas of the 'complete picture' as opposed to the day to day decisions made in the presence of peers.

These findings showed that the influence of various referent groups, based on asking participants about perceived expectations, support previous research. The expectations of peers appeared to have the greatest influence on participants' actual behaviours. Each participant identified various expectations of peers. Repeatedly, participants 'lived up to' peers' expectations. Although other referent groups - parents, church, society, or media - may have had different expectations, the adolescents were more likely to behave according to their peer group regardless of these other referents' expectations.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) said that the referent or referent groups that have the potential to reward or punish have the most power. The more power, the more likely it is that the adolescent will follow the norms or expectations. Previous research, identified the importance of acceptance by peers during adolescence (Chilman, 1980; Mitchell, 1993) and the function that peers served in facilitating independence from the family (Brown & Fritz, 1988). Based on this literature, it was not surprising to find that the peer group had the most power in this study. There was only slight variation, both between participants and over time, as to which of two referents, peers and parents, provided the greatest motivation to comply.

Environment - Substance Use and Locus

Consistent with the BCI model by King and Wright (1993), the environment that adolescents find themselves in can influence their decisions regarding sexual behaviours. Herold (1984) found that alcohol interfered with effective contraceptive use. Participants in this study indicated that use of alcohol has effected their decisions regarding sexual activity. For example, Susan eventually had sexual intercourse without intending to be sexually active because she had been drinking. An additional situational factor was that she was alone with the boy and that he was being very open about his feelings at the time.

Other participants who have not been sexually active discussed the importance of avoiding certain situational factors (environments) in which they know they would be tempted to be sexually active. In addition to avoiding use of alcohol and drugs, participants would avoid being alone with the person or with the 'wrong crowd", talk openly about not wanting to be sexually active and be sure not to mislead the other person through their actions.

Again, discussion about potential consequences of certain situations or places, and substance use would be beneficial to HIV/AIDS education programs. For example, those adolescents that have found themselves in difficult situations can share with others specifics of the situation. Knowing what situational factors may be associated with risky sexual decision-making allows adolescents to develop appropriate coping skills (Herold et. al., 1990; King & Wright, 1993).

Closing Remarks

As the data were analyzed, trends and relationships emerged. Some of the factors and the relationships between the factors that effect adolescents' sexual behaviours had been proposed in previous research. The use of qualitative research was also recommended as the most effective, or at the least most appropriate, means of understanding the sexual decisions of the adolescent population.

These findings confirmed the importance of understanding the personal nature of sexual activity, the necessity to effect the existing norms in order to support HIV/AIDS preventive behaviour and the value of including sexual limit setting as a means of encouraging HIV/AIDS preventive behaviours. The objectives of this research have been met in that these findings allowed for an examination of adolescents' perceptions of sexual behaviours, the ways in which young people learn about sexual issues, the ways in which they form attitudes and values, and the sexual behaviours that they identify as socially approved and discouraged.

The challenge that remains is the implementation of these findings in the development of more effective HIV/AIDS education. In order to do justice to the factors that have proven to influence adolescents' decisions about sexual behaviours, researchers must continue to use qualitative methods with larger numbers of participants. The insight that was gained through ten interviews was only an indication of the type of information that can be gathered if time, effort, and expertise could be devoted to discussing sexuality openly with adolescents, in particular decisions about sexual behaviours.

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APPENDIX 1

Sexuality of Canadian Young People: Focus Group Interview Guide

Grade 9, 11 and University Students

Social Program Evaluation Group Queen's University at Kingston	and	Department of Human Ecology University of Alberta

Introduction: Thanks for coming today. I am part of a research team who is finding out about young people's sexuality in order to develop effective educational programs and materials. How young people relate to each other and what they do is a very important part of this study. We need to know if the questions we ask make sense and if there are any other questions that we should be asking.

Remember, all the information you give will be recorded but kept confidential. There is no way that your friends, family or anyone who you know will be able to find out what you wrote or said. Please do not repeat any of the comments after the interview is over. If you feel awkward about a question, you don't need to answer it. If you feel too uncomfortable, you can leave the interview.

Feel free to ask questions at any time. Let's start !

We know that some young people your age get involved in relationships and others don't get involved. We need to know more about these relationships.

1. If two young people your age like each other how do they show their affection or that they care for each other?

2. What do young people your age think sexual behaviours are?

3. How do young people your age learn about sexual behaviours?

4. At what age do young people your age get involved in the different sexual behaviours?

5. What sexual behaviours do you think young people your age should do?

6. What kind of relationship(s) do you think young people your age should have if they want to get involved in these sexual behaviors? Are there certain sexual behaviours that are okay for a long term relationship but not for a first date? (Interviewer, please refer back to the sexual behaviours that were identified in Question 5.)

7. What sexual behaviours do you think are wrong for young people your age? (Interviewer, use the responses to previous questions as examples of the behaviours.)

Knowledge is the information that you have or your understanding about things. We know from other studies that young people in your age group know a lot about sexual behaviours.

Values are things that are important to us. Different young people can have different values. As well, young people can value different things at different times in their lives. For example, at certain time in their lives some young people may value parents while others value friends. Values also act as standards. They are the things that help you to make decisions that are right for you. For example, young people your age may decide not to get involved sexually because they believe sexual relationships are for married people. In other words, they value abstinence more than becoming sexually involved with someone.

8. What values help young people your age make choices about sexual behaviours? (Interviewer, review description of values from above and use the responses to previous question as examples of the behaviours.)

9. Where do young people your age get these values from? (Interviewer encourage participants to identify who along with where - e.g. teachers at school, parents at home)

10. Have these values changed since leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) Grade 6? junior high school? senior high school? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

11. Will these values change for young people in your age group after leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) junior high school? senior high school? university? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

Attitudes are your feelings about things. For example; young people can feel positive, neutral or negative about school. At the same time, people can have attitudes about things they don't do. For example, even if you don't date, you may feel positive, neutral or negative about dating.

12. What attitudes do young people your age have about sexual behaviours? (Interviewer review what attitudes are and give examples of feelings such as: would feel good, bad, fearful, worried, excited, guilty.)

13. Where do young people your age get these attitudes from? (Interviewer please encourage participants to identify who along with where; e.g. teachers at school, parents at home)

14. Have these attitudes changed since since leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) Grade 6? junior high school? senior high school? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

15. Will these attitudes change for young people your age after leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) junior high school? senior high school? university? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

Expectations are placed by others on young people your age. Expectations include hwat others think about how young people should act and what they should do. There are all kinds of expectations for young people. There are even expectations for sexual behaviours. For example, an expectation of others may be that young people in junior high school should not have sexual intercourse.

16. What are the expectations related to sexual behaviours for young people your age?

17. Who or where do these expectations come from? (Interviewer please use the bullets as probes for the question.)

    - society?
    - culture or ethnicity?
    - parents?
    - friends?
    - church?
    - school?
    - media?

18. Should there be more expectations about sexual behaviour for young people your age? If yes, what expectations? If not, why not?

19. Should there be fewer expectations? If yes, what expectations should be dropped? If no, why not?

We discussed earlier on what young people your age mean by sexual behaviours.

20. If young people in your age group wanted to be involved in sexual behaviours or wanted to be sexually active, what would they do? (Interviewer please use the following bullets as probes for the question.)

- who would make the first move or initiate the behaviours?

- who would it be with?

- what kind of relationship could it be (e.g. only love, first date, many partners, long term, short term)?

- how would they go about it?

- would they use alcohol or drugs?

- where would they go?

- when would it be?

- what would they wear?

- if they had been sexually active, would they talk about what they had done in the past or their sexual history?

- would they talk about what they wanted to do?

21. If young people in your age group don't want to be involved in sexual behaviours what would they do? (Interviewer please use the following bullets as probes for the question.)

    - what would they do (including use of alcohol or drugs)?

    - where would they go?

    - what would they wear?

- would they talk about what they want to do?

Even though young people in your age group have certain knowledge, values, and attitudes about sexual behaviour, these same young people sometimes change what they believe and feel because of situations. In other words, situations can influence young people into altering or changing their values and attitudes. For example, a young person who values abstinence and does not want to have sexual intercourse may be pressured when alone with a partner in a car to have intercourse. Another example; a couple who is sexually active may choose not to have sexual intercourse in their parents' homes.

22. Describe situations that encourage young people your age to get involved in sexual behaviours when they didn't want to? (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else is there and what they are doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

- where?

- when?

- what happens?

- who is there?

- what would be the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

- why do they get involved?

23. Describe situations that discourage young people your age from getting involved in sexual behaviours when they would like to be involved? (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else is there and what they are doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

- where?

- when?

- what happens?

- who is there?

- what would be the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

- why do they get involved?

We know from other studies that some young people your age take risks or are involved in risky sexual behaviours.

24. What would young people your age say are risky sexual behaviours?

25. Can young people your age do anything to prevent these risky behaviours from happening? If yes, what can they do? If no, why can't they do anything? (Interviewer use the risky behaviours from Question 24.)

26. Can others do anything to help young people your age prevent these risky behaviours from happening? If yes, who can do something and what can they do? If no, why can't others do anything? (Interviewer use the risky behaviours from Question 24.)

Conclusion: Thank you very much for your participation. Your comments will be confidential. No one here will tell others what you have said and there is no way that your parents, other friends or anyone else will find out. If any questions come up in the future please call me at 492-5771.

If you want to receive a summary of the interview part of this study, please leave me your name and a mailing address.

Sexuality of Canadian Young People: Pre-Interview Questions: Grades 9 and 11 Students

The research team for this study includes Drs. King and Warren from Queen's University and Drs. Munro and Poirier from the University of Alberta with Joann Ferland and Roula Hawa.

Thanks for volunteering to be part of this study. We(I) are(am) part of a research team who is finding out about young people's sexuality so that we develop effective educational programs and materials. How young people relate and what they do is a very important part of this study. We(I) need to know if the questions make sense and if there are other questions that should be asked.

Remember, information you give will be kept confidential. There is no way that your friends, family or anyone who you know can find out what you wrote. You don't have to answer any question that you find too private.

Feel free to ask questions at any time. If any questions come up in the future please call the interviewer at 492-5771. If you would like to receive a summary of the study, please leave your name and mailing address.

WE NEED TO KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT THE PEOPLE GIVING US INFORMATION IN THE INTERVIEWS. PLEASE PUT YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE BOXES.

1. Are you male or female? ☐

KEY
1= Male 2= Female

2. How old are you? Years ☐ ☐ Months ☐ ☐

FOR EXAMPLE
If you are 12 years and 6 months old, you would place 1 2 and 0 6 in the double boxes.

3. What grade are you in? ☐ ☐

4. What was your average mark last term? ☐ ☐

FOR EXAMPLE
If your average was about 65, you would place 6 5 in the double box. Or, if you had a "B" average, you would place a B in one of the boxes.

5. When do you expect to finish your education? ☐

KEY
1 = Before I graduate from high school
2 = When I graduate from high school
3 = When I graduate from community college, CEGEP or technical institute
4 = When I graduate from university
5 = Don't know
6 = Other (please write in)
____

6. Who do you live with now? ☐ ☐

KEY
1 = Mother and father
2 = Mother only
3 = Father only
4 = Mother and stepfather
5 = Father and stepmother
6 = Guardian(s)
7 = No-one
8 = Girlfriend(s)
9 = Boyfriend(s)
10 = Other (please write in)
____

7. Who were you living with a year ago today? ☐ ☐

KEY
1 = Mother and father
2 = Mother only
3 = Father only
4 = Mother and stepfather
5 = Father and stepmother
6 = Guardian(s)
7 = No-one
8 = Girlfriend(s)
9 = Boyfriend(s)
10 = Other (please write in)
____

8. Where were your parents born?
Mother ☐ ☐
Father ☐ ☐

KEY
1 = Canada
2 = Caribbean country
3 = China or Hong Kong
4 = England, Ireland, Scotland or Wales
5 = France
6 = Germany
7 = Greece
8 = India or Pakistan
9 = Italy
10 = Japan
11 = The Netherlands
12 = Portugal
13 = United States
14 = Vietnam
15 = Other country (please write in)
____
16 = Don't know

9. Do you have a job? ☐

KEY
1= Yes 2= No

10. If you have a job, what do you do? ______________________

11. If you have a job, how many hours a week do you work? _____

12. How many cigarettes do you usually smoke in a day? ☐

KEY
1 = None
2 = Less than 10
3 = 10 - 20
4 = More than 20

13. How often do you use the following?

KEY
1 = Never
2 = On special occasions
3 = About once a month
4 = 2 - 3 times a month
5 = Once a week
6 = 2 - 3 times a week
7 = Every day

a) Chewing tobacco ☐
b) Marijuana ☐
c) Other illegal drugs, e.g. LSD, hash, crack, etc. ☐
d) Medical drugs, e.g. Prozac, Gravol, Seconal, etc. ☐
e) Alcoholic beverages ☐
f) Solvents, e.g. glue or gasoline ☐

14. How often do you accept the following?

KEY
1 = Never
2 = On special occasions
3 = About once a month
4 = 2 - 3 times a month
5 = Once a week
6 = 2 - 3 times a week
7 = Every day

a) A ride from someone you do not know very well ☐

b) A ride from someone who has been drinking a lot of alcohol ☐

15. How often have you ever had the following experiences?

KEY
0 = Never
1 = Once
2 = Twice
3 = Three times
4 = Four times
5 = Five times
6 = Six times
7 = Seven or more times

a) Holding hands ☐
b) Hugging ☐
c) Deep kissing (French) ☐
d) Above the waist petting ☐
e) Below the waist petting ☐
e) Oral sex (intercourse) ☐
f) Vaginal sex (intercourse) without condom ☐
g) Vaginal sex (intercourse) with condom ☐
h) Anal sex (intercourse) without condom ☐

i) Anal sex (intercourse) with condom ☐

j) Other (please write in) ☐

____

16. Describe a typical week you spent recently at school by filling in the following charts with what you do and who you do it with and with approximately how many people you do it.

For example, if you usually go to the movies with six of your girlfriends and boyfriends on weekends in the evening, please put the following in the box.

movie
6 girl/boyfriends

Please use the top of the box for what you do and the bottom of the box for how many and who you do it with.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE INFORMATION YOU'VE GIVEN. IT WILL BE VERY HELPFUL.

APPENDIX 3

Sexuality
of
Canadian Young People:
Individual Interview Guide

Grade 9, 11 and University Students

Social Program
Evaluation Group
Queen's University
at Kingston

and

Department of
Human Ecology
University of
Alberta

Individ.Int.9,11,U

Introduction: Thanks for coming today. I am part of a research team who is finding out about young people's sexuality in order to develop effective educational programs and materials. How young people relate to each other and what they do is a very important part of this study. We need to know if the questions we ask make sense and if there are any other questions that we should be asking.

Remember, all the information you give will be recorded but kept confidential. There is no way that your friends, family or anyone who you know will be able to find out what you wrote or said. If you feel awkward about a question, let me know and you don't need to answer it. If you feel too uncomfortable during the interview let me know and you can leave.

Feel free to ask questions at any time. Are you ready to start ?

We know that some young people your age get involved in relationships and others don't get involved. We need to know more about these relationships; what goes on and what happens.

1. If you like another person, how do you show your feelings or that you care? How would you show your affection? How would the other person show feelings and caring and affection?

2. What do you think sexual behaviours are? Can you list them for me?

3. How did you and how do you learn about sexual behaviours?

4. Have you been involved sexually? If yes, at what age did you get involved sexually? Did you get involved in the different behaviours at different ages? At what age did you get involved in the different behaviours?

5. What sexual behaviours do you think you should get involved in?

6. What kind of relationship(s) do you think you should have if you want to get involved in these sexual behaviours? Are there certain sexual behaviours that are okay for a long term relationship but not for a first date? (Interviewer, please refer back to the sexual behaviours that were identified in Question 5.)

7. What sexual behaviours do you think are wrong for you? (Interviewer, use the responses to previous questions as examples of the behaviours.)

Knowledge is the information that you have or your understanding about things. We know from other studies that young people in your age group know a lot about sexual behaviours.

Values are things that are important to us. Different young people can have different values. As well, young people can value different things at different times in their lives. For example, at certain time in their lives some young people may value parents while others value friends. Values also act as standards. They are the things that help you to make decisions that are right for you. For example, young people your age may decide not to get involved sexually because they believe sexual relationships are for married people. In other words, they value abstinence more than becoming sexually involved with someone.

8. What values helped or help you make choices about sexual behaviours? (Interviewer, review description of values from above and use the responses to previous question as examples of the behaviours.)

9. Where did and where do you get your values from? (Interviewer encourage participant to identify who along with where - e.g. teachers at school, parents at home)

10. Have your values changed since leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) Grade 6? junior high school? senior high school? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

11. Do you think your values will change after leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) junior high school? senior high school? university? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

Attitudes are your feelings about things. For example; young people can feel positive, neutral or negative about school. At the same time, people can have attitudes about things they don't do. For example, even if you don't date, you may feel positive, neutral or negative about dating.

12. What attitudes do you have about sexual behaviours? (Interviewer review what attitudes are and give examples of feelings such as: would feel good, bad, fearful, worried, excited, guilty.)

Individ.Int.9,11,U

13. Where did and where do you get your attitudes from? (Interviewer please encourage participants to identify who along with where; e.g. teachers at school, parents at home)

14. Have your attitudes changed since leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) Grade 6? junior high school? senior high school? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

15. Do you think your attitudes will change after leaving (Interviewer please select appropriate level and circle the one chosen.) junior high school? senior high school? university? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

Individ.Int.9,11,U

Expectations are placed by others on young people your age. Expectations include what others think about how young people should act and what they should do. There are all kinds of expectations for young people. There are even expectations for sexual behaviours. For example, an expectation of others may be that young people in junior high school should not have sexual intercourse.

16. What expectations are there for you related to sexual behaviours?

17. Who or where do these expectations come from? (Interviewer please use the bullets as probes for the question.)

- society?
- culture or ethnicity?
- parents?
- friends?
- church?
- school?
- media?

Individid.Int.9,11,U

18. Should there be more expectations for you? If yes, what expectations? If not, why not?

19. Should there be fewer expectations for you? If yes, what expectations should be dropped? If no, why not?

Earlier we talked about what you mean by sexual behaviours.

20. If you wanted to be involved in sexual behaviours or if you wanted to be sexually active, how would you go about it? (Interviewer please use the following bullets as probes for the question.)

- how would you make the first move or initiate the behaviours?

- who would it be with?

- what kind of relationship could you have (e.g. only love, first date, many partners, long term, short term)?

- how would you go about it?

Individid.Int.9,11,U

- would you use alcohol or drugs?

- where would you go?

- when would it be?

- would you wear anything special or different?

- if you had been or were sexually active, would you talk about what you had done in the past or your sexual history?

- would you ask your partner about her/his sexual history?

- would you talk about what sexual behaviours you wanted to do?

21. If you don't want to be involved in sexual behaviours how would you go about it? (Interviewer please use the following bullets as probes for the question.)

    - what would you do (including use of alcohol or drugs)?

    - where would you go?

- would you wear something special or different?

- would you talk about not wanting get involved?

Even though young people in your age group have certain knowledge, values, and attitudes about sexual behaviour, these same young people sometimes change what they believe and feel because of situations. In other words, situations can influence young people into altering or changing their values and attitudes. For example, a young person who values abstinence and does not want to have sexual intercourse may be pressured when alone with a partner in a car, to have intercourse. Another example, a couple who is sexually active may choose not to have sexual intercourse in their parents' homes.

22. If you have been involved in sexual behaviours please describe those situations that have encouraged you to become involved. (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else was there and what they were doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

    - where has this happened?

    - when has this happened?

    - what happened?

    - who was there?

- what were the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

- why did you get involved?

23. If you have been involved in sexual behaviours please describe those situations that have discouraged you from becoming involved. (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else was there and what they were doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

    - where has this happened?

    - when has this happened?

    - what happened?

    - who was there?

    - what were the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

    - why didn't you get involved?

24. If you have not been involved in sexual behaviours please describe those situations that might encourage you to become involved. (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else might be there and what they might be doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

- where might this happen?

- when might this happen?

- what might happen?

- who might be there?

- what might be the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

- why would you get involved?

25. If you have not been involved in sexual behaviours please describe those situations that discourage you from becoming involved. (Interviewer please probe for location, activity, emotions or feelings of involved individual and others, social context or who else might be there and what they might be doing, as well as physical characteristics of the location and the other people.)

- where might this happen?

- when might this happen?

- what might happen?

- who might be there?

- what might be the feelings of the involved individual and the other person(s)?

- why wouldn't you get involved?

We know from other studies that some young people your age take risks or are involved in risky sexual behaviours.

26. What would you say are risky sexual behaviours?

27. Can others do anything to help you prevent these risky behaviours from happening? If yes, who can do something and what can they do? If no, why can't others do anything? (Interviewer use the risky behaviours from Question 24.)

Conclusion: Thank you very much for your participation. Your comments will be confidential. There is no way that your parents, other friends or anyone else will find out. If any questions come up in the future please call me at 492-5771.

If you want to receive a summary of the interview part of this study, please leave me your name and a mailing address.

Individ.Int.9,11,U

APPENDIX 4

Sexuality of Canadian Youth

Interviewer's Guide:

Grade 9, 11 and University Students

Social Program
Evaluation Group
Queen's University
at Kingston

and

Department of
Human Ecology
University of
Alberta

interviewer's guide September 9/93

NOTES TO THE INTERVIEWER:

- The focus group interview is a method for collecting data using a qualitative approach. The dialogue among the participants is very important. The success of a focus group interview depends, in part, on the interviewer's ability to establish a trusting, open, and respectful setting so participants feel comfortable to be open and honest in their comments. It is important for the interviewer to use the language of the participants.

  The interview is unstructured in that the interviewer begins with an open-ended question but proceeds by focusing on the participants' comments. Therefore, the interviewer is very flexible. The questions that have been outlined in this guide may be discussed in a different order than they are presented.

- The focus group interviews and the individual interviews in this study are used to collect data in three areas. These are: 1) meanings of sexual activity and sexuality(ies); 2) contexts of sexual activity; and 3) specific sexual behaviours and activities.

- There are 4 components. They are: 1) Sexuality of Canadian Youth: Pre-Interview Questions: Grade 9, 11, and University Students which is a separate document; 2) Sexuality of Canadian Youth: Interviewer's Guide: Grade 9, 11, and University Students which is this document and includes questions about the interviews; 3) Sexuality of Canadian Youth: Focus Group Interview Guide: Grade 9, 11, and University Students which is a separate document; and 4) Sexuality of Canadian Youth: Individual Interview Guide: Grade 9, 11, and University Students which is a separate document.

- In addition to writing comments in the individual and focus group interview guide please tape record the interviews as well.

- In the Focus Group Interview Guide and the Individual Interview Guide:

  •the questions to be considered for participants are numbered.

  •special information for the interviewer is bracketed.

  •statements that are **bolded** contain lead-in information for the questions and this information is not numbered. These statements can be read to the participants before asking the questions that follow.

  •for questions 10, 11, 14 and 15 please note that for Grade 9's the question should read, for example, "Have your values changed since leaving Grade 6?"; for Grade 11's, "since leaving junior high school," and so on.

  •please fill in the questions about the interview once you have completed the focus group and individual interviews.

SPECIAL NOTES TO THE INTERVIEWER:

- Sexuality may be a sensitive topic for some people. Participants in the study may be not interested in sexual behaviours, not involved in sexual behaviours, heterosexual, homosexual including lesbian or gay, or bisexual. Please keep this in mind as you proceed with the interviews.
- If a participant who is under the legal age reveals sexual abuse the interviewer must take appropriate action as required by law in his/her province.
- The interviewer should have a list of appropriate local resources available for young people who may request further assistance. This list should be shown to the participant at her/his request but not given to her/him.
- Please combine participants pre-interview schedule with their individual interview guide and tape for future study purposes.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INTERVIEW:

These questions are about the interview itself. They have been included before the questions and information for the participants in the focus group and individual interviews to alert you what to consider. You may choose to take notes during the interview and complete these questions after the interview is over.

1. Date of the interviews: individual ________
focus ________

2. How long did the individual interviews take? ____hour(s)____min(s)

2. How long did the focus group interviews take? ____hour(s)____min(s)

3. Please describe the following characteristics of the interview:

gender female _____ male _____

tone

mood

energy level

rapport with interviewer

rapport among participants

unusual circumstances

APPENDIX 5

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2E7

Department of Human Ecology
3-38 Assiniboia Hall, Telephone (403) 492-5771
FAX (403) 492-7527

75th
Anniversary
1918 to 1993
Household Economics
Home Economics
Human Ecology

August ___, 1993

Dear "Participant":

Thank-you for taking the time and interest to read this letter. I am part of the research team from the University of Alberta doing a study which is designed to explore the Sexuality of Canadian Youth. Very little research has been done in the area of teen sexual behaviour in which you, the "experts", have been consulted as to what you are "really thinking and/or doing". In order to develop effective educational programs for your needs we need your help and especially your ideas. I am pleased that you are reading this letter and hope that you will be interested in participating in this discussion with me.

Your participation is voluntary and you will be free to withdraw without penalty at any point throughout the process. If you agree to participate it will require one evening in which we will spend up to two hours as a group discussing the sexual behaviour of young people your age. You will also fill out a questionaire which will give me some information about you. At no time will you have to identify yourself by name and you are free to choose not to answer any question you prefer not to.

During the group discussion you will be asked some broad questions about young people your age, not about yourself. All the discussions will be taped and transcribed, however all the information provided will be strictly anonymous. Once we have completed the discussion I will be asking three participants to complete an individual interview with me. Again all this information will be strictly confidential and anonymous. Again you are free to withdraw at any time.

I hope to complete the group discussion on Tuesday, September ___ and the individual interviews on Wednesday, September ___ at a time and place convenient for all of us. I hope you will participate in this study. Please feel free to contact me at home this weekend at 470-0310 if you have any questions or concerns. I am working with Dr. Maryanne Poirier in the Department of Human Ecology and you may contact her at 492-3922. I will be contacting you on Monday, September 6th in order to confirm your participation.

Please find enclosed consent forms for both you and your parents to complete. The consent forms can be returned to me at the time of the interview.

If you wish to receive a copy of the summary of this study please fill out the bottom half of this page and return to me with your consent form. Thank-you for your interest and I hope that you will agree to work with me.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Ferland
University of Alberta

I would like to receive a copy of the summary of the Sexuality of Canadian Youth study when it is completed.

NAME: ______________________
ADDRESS: ______________________
____
____

University of Alberta
Edmonton
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75th
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Memo to: **STUDY PARTICIPANTS (Qualitative)**

FROM:

Drs. Alan King & Wendy Warren
Duncan McArthur Hall
Queen's University
Tel: (613) 545-6255

Drs. Brenda Munro & MaryannePoirier
Joann Ferland and Roula Kteily-Hawa
3-38 University Hall, University of Alberta
Tel: (403) 492-4528

I agree to participate in an interview which will be more like a discussion about sexuality. The conversation could take up to two hours and will be tape recorded. I will be taking no risks by being involved. I understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I am free to refuse to answer any question at any time during the discussion. I understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. I understand that all the young people participating in this study have been asked to keep all comments confidential. I agree to do this as well.

It is clear to me that my name or other identifying information will not be included on the tape, transcripts or in any report. My name, address and telephone number will be kept in a locked drawer, separate from the transcripts in case the researchers need to recontact me until the end of the research when it will be destroyed.

I understand that a written account of the conversation may be used for further analyses. The information may be discussed with other researchers and will be included in publications (e.g., journal articles). Under no circumstances will my name or any other of my comments be identifiable.

I have read the above, been given an opportunity to ask questions, and these questions have been answered to my satisfaction. In addition, I know I may contact the researchers if I have further questions either now or in the future.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, ______________________________
(sign your name)

____
(please print)

have consented to participate in this study.

Study Team Member: ____________________ **Telephone:** ____________

Date: ____________________

APPENDIX 6

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2E7

Department of Human Ecology
3-38 Assiniboia Hall, Telephone (403) 492-5771
FAX (403) 492-7527

75th
Anniversary
1918 to 1993
Household Economics
Home Economics
Human Ecology

August ___, 1993

Dear "Parent":

Thank-you for taking the time and interest to read this letter. I am part of the research team from the University of Alberta doing a study which is designed to explore the Sexuality of Canadian Youth. Very little research has been done in the area of teen sexual behaviour in which the teens are consulted as to what they "are really thinking or doing". In order to develop effective educational programs for our young people it is important that we allow them a "voice" rather than giving them information which we "think they need". I have contacted your daughter/son and asked her/him to participate in a discussion with me.

Participation in the study is voluntary and your daughter/son will be free to withdraw without penalty at any point throughout the process of the study. If you agree to allow your teen to participate it will require one evening in which we will spend up to two hours working as a group on discussing the sexual behaviour of young people their age. Initially they will fill out a written questionnaire which will provide me with some information regarding the participants. At no time will they have to identify themselves by name and they are free to not answer any question should they so choose.

During the group discussion they will be asked several broad questions which will ask them to discuss "young people their age"; not themselves specifically. All the discussions will be taped and transcribed, however all the information provided will be strictly anonymous. Once I have completed the group process I will be asking three of the youth to complete an individual interview with me. Again the information provided in this interview will be strictly anonymous and confidential. Your daughter/son is again free to withdraw or choose not to answer any questions if she/he so desires.

I hope to complete the group discussion on Tuesday, September __ and the individual interviews on Wednesday, September ___ at a time and place convenient to myself and the participants. I hope you will allow your daughter/son the opportunity to participate in this study. Please feel free to call me at home this weekend at 470-0310 if you have any questions or concerns. I am working with Dr. Maryanne Poirier in the Department of Human Ecology and you may contact her at 492-3922 I will be contacting your teen on Monday, September 6th in order to confirm their involvement.

Please find enclosed consent forms which need to be completed by you and your daughter/son. Again do not hesitate to call me if you have questions and /or concerns. The consent forms can be returned to me with your daughter/son at the time of the group interview.

If you wish to receive a copy of the summary of this study please fill out the bottom half of this page and return to me with your consent form. Thank-you for your interest and please do not hesitate to call me with your questions.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Ferland
University of Alberta

I would like to receive a copy of the summary of the Sexuality Behaviour of Canadian Youth study when it is completed.

NAME: ____________________________
ADDRESS: ____________________________
____
____

University of Alberta
Edmonton

Department of Human Ecology

Canada T6G 2E7

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Memo to: **PARENTS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS (Qualitative Study)**

FROM: Drs. Alan King & Wendy Warren
Duncan McArthur Hall
Queen's University
Tel: (613) 545-6255

Drs. Brenda Munro & MaryannePoirier
Joann Ferland and Roula Kteily-Hawa
3-38 University Hall, University of Alberta
Tel: (403) 492-4528

I give permission to have my child participate in an interview which will be more like a discussion about sexuality, provided my child agrees. The conversation could take up to two hours and will be tape recorded. He/she will be taking no risks by being involved. I understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that my child is free to refuse to answer any question at any time during the discussion. I understand that my child may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.

It is clear to me that my child's name or other identifying information will not be included on the tape, transcripts or in any report. My child's name, address and telephone number will be kept in a locked drawer, separate from the transcripts in case the researchers need to recontact him/her until the end of the research when it will be destroyed.

I understand that a written account of the conversation may be used for further analyses. The information may be discussed with other researchers and will be included in publications (e.g., journal articles). Under no circumstances will my child's name or any other of his/her information be identifiable.

I have read the above, been given an opportunity to ask questions, and these questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I addition, I know I may contact the researchers if I have further questions either now or in the future.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, ____________________
(sign your name)

THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF ____________________
(please print)

have given permission for my child to participate in this study.

Study Team Member: ____________________ **Telephone:** ____________

Date: ____________________